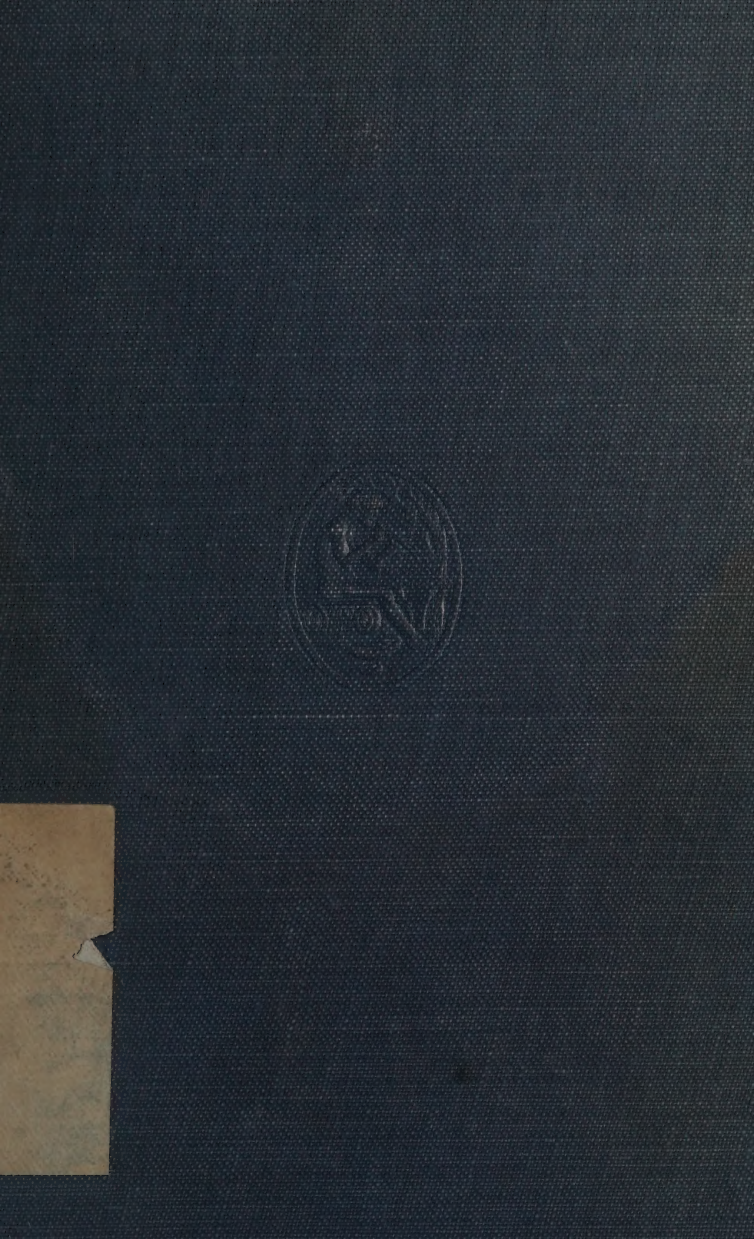

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BY

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AUTHOR OF "POINTS OF FRICTION," "COMPROMISES"
"COUNTER-CURRENTS," ETC.

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Note

FIVE of the twelve essays in this volume, "To Counsel the Doubtful," "The Happiness of Writing an Autobiography," "The Divineness of Discontent," "Strayed Sympathies," and "The Battlefield of Education," are reprinted through the courtesy of *The Atlantic Monthly;* four of them, "The Masterful Puritan," "Are Americans a Timid People?" "Allies," and "The American Laughs," through the courtesy of *The Yale Review;* "The Preacher at Large," through the courtesy of *The Century Magazine;* "They Had Their Day," through the courtesy of *Harper's Magazine;* "The Idolatrous Dog," through the courtesy of *The Forum.*

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UNDER DISPUTE

The Masterful Puritan

WHEN William Chillingworth, preaching at Oxford in the first year of England's Civil War, defined the Cavaliers as publicans and sinners, and the Puritans as Scribes and Pharisees, he expressed the reasonable irritation of a scholar who had no taste or aptitude for polemics, yet who had been blown about all his life by every wind of doctrine. Those were uneasy years for men who loved moderation in everything, and who found it in nothing. It is not from such that we can hope for insight into emotions from which they were exempt, and purposes to which they held no clue.

In our day it is generously conceded

that the Puritans made admirable ancestors. We pay them this handsome compliment in after-dinner speeches at all commemorative meetings. Just what they would have thought of their descendants is an unprofitable speculation. Three hundred years divide us from those stern enthusiasts who, coveting lofty things, found no price too high to pay for them. "It is not with us as with men whom small matters can discourage, or small discontentments cause to wish themselves at home again," wrote William Brewster, when one half of the Mayflower Pilgrims had died in the first terrible year, and no gleam of hope shone on the survivors. To perish of hunger and cold is not what we should now call a "small discontentment." To most of us it would seem a good and sufficient reason for abandoning any enterprise whatsoever. Perhaps if we would fix our attention upon a single detail — the fact that for four

years the Plymouth colonists did not own a cow — we should better understand what life was like in that harsh wilderness, where children who could not get along without milk had but one other alternative — to die.

Men as strong as were the Puritan pioneers ask for no apologies at our hands. Their conduct was shaped by principles and convictions which would be insupportable to us, but which are none the less worthy of regard. Matthew Arnold summed up our modern disparagement of their standards when he pictured Virgil and Shakespeare crossing on the Mayflower, and finding the Pilgrim fathers "intolerable company." I am not sure that this would have been the case. Neither Virgil nor Shakespeare could have survived Plymouth. That much is plain. But three months on the Mayflower might not have been so "intolerable" as Mr. Arnold fancied. The Roman and the

Elizabethan were strong-stomached observers of humanity. They knew a man when they saw one, and they measured his qualities largely.

Even if we make haste to admit that two great humanizers of society, art and letters, played but a sorry part in the Puritan colonies, we know they were less missed than if these colonies had been worldly ventures, established solely in the interest of agriculture or of trade. Sir Andrew Macphail tersely reminds us that the colonists possessed ideals of their own, "which so far transcended the things of this world that art and literature were not worth bothering about in comparison with them." Men who believe that, through some exceptional grace or good fortune, they have found God, feel little need of culture. If they believe that they share God with all races, all nations, and all ages, culture comes in the wake of religion. But the Puritan's God was a

somewhat exclusive possession. "Christ died for a select company that was known to Him, by name, from eternity," wrote the Reverend Samuel Willard, pastor of the South Church, Boston, and author of that famous theological folio, "A Compleat Body of Divinity." "The bulk of mankind is reserved for burning," said Jonathan Edwards genially; and his Northampton congregation took his word for it. That these gentlemen knew no more about Hell and its inmates than did Dante is a circumstance which does not seem to have occurred to any one. A preacher has some advantages over a poet.

If the Puritans never succeeded in welding together Church and State, which was the desire of their hearts, they had human nature to thank for their failure. There is nothing so abhorrent — or so perilous — to the soul of man as to be ruled in temporal things

by clerical authority. Yet inasmuch as the colony of Massachusetts Bay had for its purpose the establishment of a state in which all citizens should be of the same faith, and church membership should be essential to freemen, it was inevitable that the preacher and the elder should for a time dominate public counsels. "Are you, sir, the person who serves here?" asked a stranger of a minister whom he met in the streets of Rowley. "I am, sir, the person who rules here," was the swift and apt response.

Men whose position was thus firmly established resented the unauthorized intrusion of malcontents. Being reformers themselves, they naturally did not want to be reformed. Alone among New England colonists, the Pilgrims of Plymouth, who were Separatists or Independents, mistrusted the blending of civil and religious functions, and this mistrust had deepened during the so-

journ of their leaders in Holland. Moreover, unlike their Boston neighbours, the Pilgrims were plain, simple people; "not acquainted," wrote Governor Bradford, "with trades nor traffique, but used to a countrie life, and the innocente trade of husbandry." They even tried the experiment of farming their land on a communal system, and, as a result, came perilously close to starvation. Only when each man cultivated his own lot, that is, when individualism supplanted socialism, did they wring from the reluctant soil food enough to keep them alive.

To the courage and intelligence of the Pilgrim and Puritan leaders, Governor Bradford and Governor Winthrop, the settlers owed their safety and survival. The instinct of self-government was strong in these men, their measures were practical measures, their wisdom the wisdom of the world. If Bradford had not made friends with the great

sachem, Massasoit, and clinched the friendship by sending Edward Winslow to doctor him with "a confection of many comfortable conserves" when he was ill, the Plymouth colonists would have lost the trade with the Indians which tided them over the first crucial years. If Winthrop had not by force of argument and persuasion obtained the lifting of duties from goods sent to England, and induced the British creditors to grant favourable terms, the Boston colony would have been bankrupt. The keen desire of both Plymouth and Boston to pay their debts is pleasant to record, and contrasts curiously with the reluctance of wealthy States to accept the Constitution in 1789, lest it should involve a similar course of integrity.

It is hardly worth while to censure communities which were establishing, or seeking to establish, "a strong religious state" because they were in-

tolerant. Tolerance is not, and never has been, compatible with strong religious states. The Puritans of New England did not endeavour to force their convictions upon unwilling Christendom. They asked only to be left in peaceful possession of a singularly unprolific corner of the earth, which they were civilizing after a formula of their own. Settlers to whom this formula was antipathetic were asked to go elsewhere. If they did not go, they were sent, and sometimes whipped into the bargain — which was harsh, but not unreasonable.

Moreover, the "persecution" of Quakers and Antinomians was not primarily religious. Few persecutions recorded in history have been. For most of them theology has merely afforded a pious excuse. Whatever motives may have underlain the persistent persecution of the Jews, hostility to their ancient creed has had little or

nothing to do with it. To us it seems well-nigh incredible that Puritan Boston should have vexed its soul because Anne Hutchinson maintained that those who were in the covenant of grace were freed from the covenant of works — which sounds like a cinch. But when we remember that she preached against the preachers, affirming on her own authority that they had not the "seal of the Spirit"; and that she "gave vent to revelations," prophesying evil for the harassed and anxious colonists, we can understand their eagerness to be rid of her. She was an able and intelligent woman, and her opponents were not always able and intelligent men. When the turmoil which followed in her wake destroyed the peace of the community, Governor Winthrop banished her from Boston. "It was," says John Fiske, "an odious act of persecution."

A vast deal of sympathy has been

lavished upon the Puritan settlers because of the rigours of their religion, the austerity of their lives, their lack of intellectual stimulus, the comprehensive absence of anything like amusement. It has been even said that their sexual infirmities were due to the dearth of pastimes; a point of view which is in entire accord with modern sentiment, even if it falls short of the facts. Impartial historians might be disposed to think that the vices of the Puritans are apparent to us because they were so industriously dragged to light. When all moral offences are civil offences, and when every man is under the close scrutiny of his neighbours, the "find" in sin is bound to be heavy. Captain Kemble, a Boston citizen of some weight and fortune, sat two hours in the stocks on a wintry afternoon, 1656, doing penance for "lewd and unseemly behaviour"; which behaviour consisted in kissing his wife "publiquely" at his

own front door on the Lord's day. The fact that he had just returned from a long voyage, and was moved to the deed by some excess of emotion, failed to win him pardon. Neighbours were not lightly flouted in a virtuous community.

That there were souls unfit to bear the weight of Puritanism, and unable to escape from it, is a tragic truth. People have been born out of time and out of place since the Garden of Eden ceased to be a human habitation. When Judge Sewall read to his household a sermon on the text, "Ye shall seek me and shall not find me," the household doubtless protected itself by inattention, that refuge from admonition which is Nature's kindliest gift. But there was one listener, a terrified child of ten, who had no such bulwark, and who brooded over her unforgiven sins until her heart was bursting. Then suddenly, when the rest of the family

had forgotten all about the sermon, she broke into "an amazing cry," sobbing out her agonized dread of Hell. And the pitiful part of the tale is that neither father nor mother could comfort her, having themselves no assurance of her safety. "I answered her Fears as well as I could," wrote Judge Sewall in his diary, "and prayed with many Tears on either part. Hope God heard us."

The incident was not altogether uncommon. A woman of Boston, driven to desperation by the uncertainty of salvation, settled the point for herself by drowning her baby in a well, thus ensuring damnation, and freeing her mind of doubts. Methodism, though gentler than Calvinism, accomplished similar results. In Wesley's journal there is an account of William Taverner, a boy of fourteen, who was a fellow passenger on the voyage to Georgia; and who, between heavy weather and

continuous exhortation, went mad with fear, and saw an indescribable horror at the foot of his bed, "which looked at him all the time unless he was saying his prayers."

Our sympathy for a suffering minority need not, however, blind us to the fact that the vast majority of men hold on to a creed because it suits them, and because their souls are strengthened by its ministrations. "It is sweet to believe even in Hell," says that arch-mocker, Anatole France; and to no article of faith have believers clung more tenaciously. Frederick Locker tells us the engaging story of a dignitary of the Greek Church who ventured, in the early years of faith, to question this popular tenet; whereupon "his congregation, justly incensed, tore their bishop to pieces."

No Puritan divine stood in danger of suffering this particular form of martyrdom. The religion preached

in New England was a cruel religion, from which the figure of Christ, living mercifully with men, was eliminated. John Evelyn noted down in his diary that he heard the Puritan magistrates of London "speak spiteful things of our Lord's Nativity." William Brewster was proud to record that in Plymouth "no man rested" on the first Christmas day. As with Bethlehem, so with Calvary. Governor Endicott slashed with his sword the red cross of Saint George from the banner of England. The emblem of Christianity was anathema to these Christians, as was the Mother who bore Christ, and who saw Him die. The children whom He blessed became to Jonathan Edwards "young vipers, and infinitely more hateful than vipers." The sweetness of religion, which had solaced a suffering world, was wiped out. "The Puritans," wrote Henry Adams pithily, "abandoned the New Testament and the Virgin in order to

go back to the beginning, and renew the quarrel with Eve."

It took strong men to live and thrive under such a ministration, wrestling with a sullen earth for subsistence, and with an angry Heaven for salvation. Braced to endurance by the long frozen winters, plainly fed and plainly clad, in peril, like Saint Paul, of sea and wilderness, narrow of vision but steadfast to principles, they fronted life resolutely, honouring and illustrating the supreme worth of freedom.

That they had compensations, other than religious, is apparent to all but the most superficial observer. The languid indifference to our neighbour's moral and spiritual welfare, which we dignify by the name of tolerance, has curtailed our interest in life. There must have been something invigorating in the iron determination that neighbours should walk a straight path, that they should be watched at every step, and punished

for every fall. The Puritan who said, "I will not. Thou shalt not!" enjoyed his authority to the uttermost. The prohibitionist who repeats his words to-day is probably the only man who is having a thoroughly good time in our fretful land and century. It is hard, I know, to reconcile "I will not. Thou shalt not!" with freedom. But the early settlers of New England were controlled by the weight of popular opinion. A strong majority forced a wavering minority along the road of rectitude. Standards were then as clearly defined as were boundaries, and the uncompromising individualism of the day permitted no juggling with responsibility.

It is not possible to read the second chapter of "The Scarlet Letter," and fail to perceive one animating principle of the Puritan's life. The townspeople who watch Hester Prynne stand in the pillory are moved by no common emo-

tions. They savour the spectacle, as church-goers of an earlier age savoured the spectacle of a penitent in sackcloth at the portal; but they have also a sense of personal participation in the dragging of frailty to light. Hawthorne endeavours to make this clear, when, in answer to Roger Chillingworth's questions, a bystander congratulates him upon the timeliness of his arrival on the scene. "It must gladden your heart, after your troubles and sojourn in the wilderness, to find yourself at length in a land where iniquity is searched out, and punished in the sight of rulers and people." An unfortunate speech to make to the husband of the culprit (Hawthorne is seldom so ironic), but a cordial admission of content.

There was a picturesque quality about the laws of New England, and a nicety of administration, which made them a source of genuine pleasure to all

who were not being judged. A lie, like an oath, was an offense to be punished; but all lies were not equally punishable. Alice Morse Earle quotes three penalties, imposed for three falsehoods, which show how much pains a magistrate took to discriminate. George Crispe's wife who "told a lie, not a pernicious lie, but unadvisedly," was simply admonished. Will Randall who told a "plain lie" was fined ten shillings. Ralph Smith who "lied about seeing a whale," was fined twenty shillings and excommunicated — which must have rejoiced his suffering neighbours' souls.

The rank of a gentleman, being a recognized attribute in those days, was liable to be forfeited for a disgraceful deed. In 1631, Josias Plastowe of Boston was fined five pounds for stealing corn from the Indians; and it was likewise ordered by the Court that he should be called in the future plain Josias, and not Mr. Plastowe as for-

merly. Here was a chance for the community to take a hand in punishing a somewhat contemptible malefactor. It would have been more or less than human if it had not enjoyed the privilege.

By far the neatest instance of making the punishment fit the crime is recorded in Governor Bradford's "Diary of Occurrences." The carpenter employed to construct the stocks for the Plymouth colonists thought fit to charge an excessive rate for the job; whereupon he was speedily clapped into his own instrument, "being the first to suffer this penalty." And *we* profess to pity the Puritans for the hardness and dulness of their lives! Why, if we could but see a single profiteer sitting in the stocks, one man out of the thousands who impudently oppress the public punished in this admirable and satisfactory manner, we should be willing to listen to sermons

two hours long for the rest of our earthly days.

And the Puritans relished their sermons, which were masterful like themselves. Dogma and denunciation were dear to their souls, and they could bear an intolerable deal of both. An hourglass stood on the preacher's desk, and youthful eyes strayed wistfully to the slender thread of sand. But if the discourse continued after the last grain had run out, a tithingman who sat by the desk turned the glass, and the congregation settled down for a fresh hearing. A three-hour sermon was a possibility in those iron days, while an eloquent parson, like Samuel Torrey of Weymouth, could and did pray for two hours at a stretch. The Reverend John Cotton, grandfather of the redoubtable Cotton Mather, and the only minister in Boston who was acknowledged by Anne Hutchinson to possess the mysterious "seal of the Spirit," had a

reprehensible habit of preaching for two hours on Sunday in the meeting-house (his family and servants of course attending), and at night, after supper, repeating this sermon to the sleepy household who had heard it in the morning.

For a hundred and fifty years the New England churches were unheated, and every effort to erect stoves was vigorously opposed. This at least could not have been a reaction against Popery, inasmuch as the churches of Catholic Christendom were at that time equally cold. That the descendants of men who tore the noble old organs out of English cathedrals, and sold them for scrap metal, should have been chary of accepting even a "pitch-pipe" to start their unmelodious singing was natural enough; but stoves played no part in the service. The congregations must have been either impervious to discomfort, or very much afraid of fires.

The South Church of Boston was first heated in the winter of 1783. There was much criticism of such indulgence, and the "Evening Post," January 25th, burst into denunciatory verse:

> "Extinct the sacred fires of love,
> Our zeal grown cold and dead;
> In the house of God we fix a stove
> To warm us in their stead."

Three blots on the Puritans' escutcheon (they were men, not seraphs) have been dealt with waveringly by historians. Witchcraft, slavery and Indian warfare gloom darkly against a shining background of righteousness. Much has been made of the fleeting phase, and little of the more permanent conditions — which proves the historic value of the picturesque. That Salem should to-day sell witch spoons and trinkets, trafficking upon memories she might be reasonably supposed to regret, is a triumph of commercialism. The brief and dire obsession of witch-

craft was in strict accord with times and circumstances. It bred fear, horror, and a tense excitement which lifted from Massachusetts all reproach of dulness. The walls between the known and the unknown world were battered savagely, and the men and women who thronged from house to house to see the "Afflicted Children" writhe in convulsions had a fearful appreciation of the spectacle. That terrible child, Ann Putnam, who at twelve years of age was instrumental in bringing to the scaffold some of the most respected citizens of Salem, is a unique figure in history. The apprehensive interest she inspired in her townspeople may be readily conceived. It brought her to ignominy in the end.

The Plymouth colonists kept on good terms with their Indian neighbours for half a century. The Bay colonists had more aggressive neighbours, and dealt with them accord-

ingly. It was an unequal combat. The malignancy of the red men lacked concentration and thoroughness. They were only savages, and accustomed to episodic warfare. The white men knew the value of finality. When Massachusetts planned with Connecticut to exterminate the Pequots, less than a dozen men escaped extermination. It was a very complete killing, and no settler slept less soundly for having had a hand in it. Mr. Fiske says that the measures employed in King Philip's War "did not lack harshness," which is a euphemism. The flinging of the child Astyanax over the walls of Troy was less barbarous than the selling of King Philip's little son into slavery. Hundreds of adult captives were sent at the same time to Barbados. It would have been more merciful, though less profitable, to have butchered them at home.

The New England settlers were not

indifferent to the Indians' souls. They forbade them, when they could, to hunt or fish on the Lord's day. John Eliot, Jonathan Edwards, and other famous divines preached to them earnestly, and gave them a fair chance of salvation. But, like all savages, they had a trick of melting into the forest just when their conversion seemed at hand. Cotton Mather, in his "Magnalia," speculates ruthlessly upon their condition and prospects. "We know not," he writes, "when or how these Indians first became inhabitants of this mighty continent; yet we may guess that probably the Devil decoyed these miserable savages hither, in hopes that the Gospel of the Lord would never come to destroy or disturb his absolute Empire over them."

Naturally, no one felt well disposed towards a race which was under the dominion of Satan. Just as the Celt and the Latin have small compunction

in ill-treating animals, because they have no souls, so the Puritan had small compunction in ill-treating heathens, because their souls were lost.

Slavery struck no deep roots in New England soil, perhaps because the nobler half of the New England conscience never condoned it, perhaps because circumstances were unfavourable to its development. The negroes died of the climate, the Indians of bondage. But traders, in whom conscience was not uppermost, trafficked in slaves as in any other class of merchandise, and stoutly refused to abandon a profitable line of business. Moreover, the deep discordance between slavery as an institution and Puritanism as an institution made such slave-holding more than ordinarily odious. Agnes Edwards, in an engaging little volume on Cape Cod, quotes a clause from the will of John Bacon of Barnstable, who bequeathed to his wife for her lifetime

the "use and improvement" of a slave-woman, Dinah. "If, at the death of my wife, Dinah be still living, I desire my executors to sell her, and to use and improve the money for which she is sold in the purchase of Bibles, and distribute them equally among my said wife's and my grandchildren."

There are fashions in goodness and badness as in all things else; but the selling of a worn-out woman for Bibles goes a step beyond Mrs. Stowe's most vivid imaginings.

These are heavy indictments to bring against the stern forbears whom we are wont to praise and patronize. But Pilgrim and Puritan can bear the weight of their misdeeds as well as the glory of their achievements. Of their good old English birthright, "truth, pitie, freedom and hardiness," they cherished all but pitie. No price was too high for them to pay for the dignity of their manhood, or for the supreme privilege

of dwelling on their own soil. They scorned the line of least resistance. Their religion was never a cloak for avarice, and labour was not with them another name for idleness and greed. Eight hours a day they held to be long enough for an artisan to work; but the principle of giving little and getting much, which rules our industrial world to-day, they deemed unworthy of freemen. No swollen fortunes corrupted their communities; no base envy of wealth turned them into prowling wolves. If they slew hostile Indians without compunction, they permitted none to rob those who were friendly and weak. If they endeavoured to exclude immigrants of alien creeds, they would have thought shame to bar them out because they were harder workers or better farmers than themselves. On the whole, a comparison between their methods and our own leaves us little room for self-congratulation.

From that great mother country which sends her roving sons over land and sea, the settlers of New England brought undimmed the sacred fire of liberty. If they were not akin to Shakespeare, they shared the inspiration of Milton. "No nobler heroism than theirs," says Carlyle, "ever transacted itself on this earth." Their laws were made for the strong, and commanded respect and obedience. In Plymouth, few public employments carried any salary; but no man might refuse office when it was tendered to him. The Pilgrim, like the Roman, was expected to serve the state, not batten on it. What wonder that a few drops of his blood carries with it even now some measure of devotion and restraint. These were men who understood that life is neither a pleasure nor a calamity. "It is a grave affair with which we are charged, and which we must conduct and terminate with honour."

"To Counsel the Doubtful"

IN the "Colony Records" of Plymouth it is set down that a certain John Williams lived unhappily with his wife — a circumstance which was as conceivable in that austere community as in less godly towns. But the Puritan magistrate who, in the year 1666, undertook to settle this connubial quarrel, had no respect for that compelling word, "incompatibility." The afflicted couple were admonished "to apply themselves to such waies as might make for the recovery of peace and love betwixt them. And for that end, the Court requested Isacke Bucke to bee officious therein."

It is the delight and despair of readers, especially of readers inclined to the intimacies of history, that they are so often told the beginnings of things, and left to conjecture the end. How did

Isacke Bucke set about his difficult and delicate commission, and how did the contentious pair relish his officiousness? The Puritans were tolerably accustomed to proffering advice. It was part of their social code, as well as a civil and religious duty. They had a happy belief in the efficacy of expostulation. In 1635 it was proposed that the magistrates of Boston should "in tenderness and love admonish one another." And many lively words must have come of it.

Roman Catholics, who studied their catechism when they were children, will always remember that the first of the "Spiritual Works of Mercy" is "To counsel the doubtful." Taken in conjunction with the thirteen other works, it presents a compendium of holiness. Taken by itself, apart from less popular rulings, such as "To forgive offences," and "To bear wrongs patiently," it is apt to be a trifle over-

bearing. Catholic theology has defined the difference between a precept and a counsel — when the Church speaks. A precept is binding, and obedience to it is an obligation. A counsel is suggestive, and obedience to it is a matter of volition. The same distinction holds good in civil and social life. A law must be obeyed; but it is in no despite of our counsellors, moral or political, that we reserve the right of choice.

Three hundred years ago, Robert Burton, who was reflective rather than mandatory, commented upon the reluctance of heretics to be converted from their errors. It seemed to him — a learned and detached onlooker — that one man's word, however well spoken, had no effect upon another man's views; and he marvelled unconcernedly that this should be the case. The tolerance or the indifference of our day has disinclined most of us to meddle with our neighbour's beliefs. We

are concerned about his tastes, his work, his politics, because at these points his life touches ours; but we have a decent regard for his spiritual freedom, and for the secret responsibility it entails.

There are, indeed, devout Christian communities which expend their time, money and energy in extinguishing in the breasts of other Christians the faith which has sufficed and supported them. The methods of these propagandists are more genial than were those of the Inquisition; but their temerity is no less, and their animating principle is the same. They proffer their competing set of dogmas with absolute assurance, forgetting that man does not live by fractions of theology, but by the correspondence of his nature to spiritual influences moulded through the centuries to meet his needs. To counsel the doubtful is a Christian duty; but to create the doubts we

counsel is nowhere recommended. It savours too closely of omniscience.

The counsels offered by age to youth are less expansive, and less untrammelled than are the counsels offered by youth to age. Experience dulls the courageous and imaginative didacticism that is so heartening, because so sanguine, in the young. We have been told, both in England and in the United States, that youth is now somewhat displeased with age, as having made a mess of the world it was trying to run; and that the shrill defiance which meets criticism indicates this justifiable resentment. It is not an easy matter to run a world at the best of times, and Germany's unfortunate ambition to control the running has put the job beyond man's power of immediate adjustment. The social lapses that have been so loudly lamented by British and American censors are the least serious symptoms of the general disintegra-

tion — the crumbling away of a cornice when the foundations are insecure.

It is interesting, however, to note the opposing methods employed by carping age to correct the excesses of youth. When a Western State disapproves of the behaviour of its young people, it turns to the courts for relief. It asks and obtains laws regulating the length of a skirt, or the momentum of a dance. When a New England State disapproves of the behaviour of its young people, it writes articles, or circulates and signs a remonstrance. Sometimes it confides its grievance to a Federation of Women's Clubs, hoping that the augustness of this assembly will overawe the spirit of revolt. I may add that when Canada (Province of Quebec) disapproves of the behaviour of its young people, it appeals to the Church, which acts with commendable promptness and semi-occasional success.

All these torrents of disapproval

have steeped society in an ebb-tide of rejected counsels. It would seem that none of us are conducting ourselves as properly as we should, and that few of us are satisfactory to our neighbours. In the rapid shifting of responsibility, we find ourselves accused when we thought we were accusers. We say that a girl's dress fails to cover a proper percentage of her body, and are told that it is the consequence of our inability to preserve peace. We pay a predatory grocer the price he asks for his goods, and are told that it is our fault he asks it. If we plead that hunger-striking — the only alternative — is incompatible with common sense and hard work, we are offered a varied assortment of substitutes for food. There is nothing in which personal tastes are more pronounced or less persuasive than in the devices of economy. Sooner or later they resolve themselves into the query of the famous and frugal Frenchman:

"Why should I pay twelve francs for an umbrella when I can buy a bock for six sous?"

The most hopeful symptom of our times (so fraught with sullenness and peril) is the violent hostility developed some years ago between rival schools of verse. There have always been individual critics as sensitive to contrary points of view as are the men who organize raids on Carnegie Hall whenever they disagree with a speaker. Swinburne was a notable example of this tyranny of opinion. It was not enough for him to love Dickens and to hate Byron, thus neatly balancing his loss and gain. He was impelled by the terms of his nature ardently to proclaim his love and his hate, and intemperately to denounce those who loved and hated otherwise.

That so keen and caustic a commentator as Mr. Chesterton should have been annoyed because he could not

turn back the tide of popular enthusiasm which surged and broke at Rudyard Kipling's feet was natural enough. He assured the British public that "Recessional" was the work of a "solemn cad"; and the British public — quite as if he had not spoken — took the poem to its heart, wept over it, prayed over it, and dilated generally with emotions which it is good for a public to feel. The looker-on was reminded a little of Horace Walpole fretfully explaining to Paris that a Salisbury Court printer could not possibly know anything about the habits of the English aristocracy; and of Paris replying to this ultimatum by reading "Clarissa Harlowe" with all its might and main, and shedding torrents of tears over the printer's matchless heroine.

The asperity of a solitary critic is, however, far less impelling than the asperity of a whole school of writers

and of their opponents. Just when the ways of the world seemed darkest, and its nations most distraught, the *literati* effected a welcome diversion by quarreling over rules of prosody. The lovers of rhyme were not content to read rhyme and to write it; the lovers of polyphonic prose were not content to read polyphonic prose and to write it; but both factions found their true joy in vivaciously criticizing and counselling their antagonists. Miss Amy Lowell was right when she said, with her customary insight and decision, that the beliefs and protests and hates of poets all go to prove the deathless vigour of the art. Unenlightened outsiders took up the quarrel with pleasure, finding relief in a dispute that threatened death and disaster to no one.

Few contentions are so innocent of ill-doing. The neighbours whom we counsel most assiduously are the nations of the world and their govern-

ments, which might well be doubtful, seeing that they stumble at every step; but which perhaps stand more in need of smooth roads than of direction. It is true that M. Stéphane Lauzanne, editor of "Le Matin," assured us in the autumn of 1920 that France did not seek American gold, or ships, or guns, or soldiers — "only counsels." This sounded quite in our line, until the Frenchman, with that fatal tendency to the concrete which is typical of the Gallic mind, proceeded to explain his meaning: "We ask of the country of Edison and of the Wrights that it will present us with a system for a league of nations that will work. If there were nothing needed but eloquence, the statesmen of old Europe would have been sufficient."

Why did not M. Lauzanne ask for the moon while he was about it? What does he suppose we Americans have been striving for since 1789 but systems

that will work? Henry Adams, commenting upon the disastrous failure of Grant's administration, says just this thing. "The world" (the American world) "cared little for decency. What it wanted, it did not know. Probably a system that would work, and men who could work it. But it found neither."

And still the search goes on. A system of taxation that will work. A system of wage-adjustment that will work. A system of prohibition that will work. A system of public education that will work. These are the bright phantoms we pursue; and now a Paris editor casually adds a system for a working league of nations. "If France is in the right, let America give us her moral support. If France is in the wrong, let America show us the road to follow."

To presume agreement where none exists is the most dangerous form of self-deception. When newspapers and

orators tell us that to the United States has come "the moral leadership of the world," we must understand them to imply that foreign nations, with whom we have little in common, are of our way of thinking — provided always that they know what we think, and that we know ourselves. For the wide divergence of national aspirations, they make scant allowance; for misunderstanding and ill-will, they make no allowance at all. Before the election of 1920, the spokesmen of both political parties assured us with equal fervour that our country was destined to be the bulwark of the world's peace. Their prescriptions for peace differed radically in detail; but all agreed that ours was to be the administering hand, and all implied the readiness of Europe (and, if need be, Asia and Africa) to accept our restoratives. "Want America to teach Turkey," was the headline of a leading newspaper, which, in October,

1920, deplored the general unteachableness of the Turk.

Perhaps the careless crudeness of headlines deceives a large class of hurried readers who rely too implicitly upon them. When the Conference at Versailles was plodding through its task, a New York paper announced in large type: "Italy dissatisfied with territory assigned her by Colonel House." It had a mirth-provoking sound; but, after all, the absurdity was in no way attributable to Colonel House; and, in the matter of dissatisfaction, not even a headline could go beyond the facts. What has ever impelled the "Tribuna" and the "Avanti" to express amicable agreement, save their mutual determination to repudiate the intervention of the United States?

When Mr. Wilson risked speaking directly to the Italian people, he paved the way for misunderstanding. To a government, words are words. It deals

with them itself, and it makes allowance for the difficulty of translating them into action. But a proletariat is apt, not merely to attach significance to words, but to read an intensive meaning into them. We have not done badly by Italy. We spent a great deal of money upon her cold and hungry children. She is sending us shiploads of immigrants. Her resentment at our counsel has seemed to us unwise and ungrateful, seeing that we must naturally know what is best for her. We cannot accept ill-will with the unconcern of Great Britain, which has been used to it, and has survived it, for centuries. We feel that we deserve well of the world, because we are immaculately free from coveting what we do not want or need.

And yet one wonders now and then whether, if there had been four years of glorious and desolating war on this Western continent, and the United

States had emerged triumphant, but spent, broken and bankrupt, we should be so sure of our mission to regenerate. Would we then be so high-handed with England, so critical of France? No people in the world resent strictures more than we do. No people in the world are less keen for admonishment. The sixty-six members of the Yale Faculty who in 1920 sent a remonstrance to Congress, protesting against any interference in the domestic policies of Great Britain, based their protest upon our unalterable determination to preserve our own independence unviolated, and to manage our own affairs. They felt, and said, that we should be scrupulous to observe the propriety we exacted of others.

The ingenious device of appointing an American committee, which in its turn appointed an American commission to sit as a court of appeal, and receive evidence touching the relations

of Great Britain and Ireland, was the most original and comprehensive measure for counselling the doubtful that this country has ever seen. The informality of the scheme made it a pure delight. Governors of Wyoming and North Dakota, mayors of Milwaukee and Anaconda, clergymen and college professors, ladies and gentlemen of unimpeachable respectability and unascertainable information, all responded to the "Nation's" call, and placed their diplomacy at its disposal.

Pains were taken by Mr. Villard to convince the public that the object of the committee was to avert "the greatest calamity which could befall the civilized world" — a war between Great Britain and the United States, than which nothing seemed less likely. Its members disclaimed anything like "improper interference in the concerns of another nation." They evidently did not consider that summoning Ire-

land and England to appear as plaintiff and defendant before a self-constituted tribunal three thousand miles away was in the nature of an interference. "I meddle with no man's conscience," said Cromwell broad-mindedly, when he closed the Catholic churches, and forbade the celebration of Mass.

The humour of selecting a group of men and women in one corner of the world, and delegating to them the unofficial task of settling public affairs in another, was lost upon Americans, who, having been repeatedly told that they were to "show the way," conceived themselves to be showing it. When Great Britain and Ireland settled their own affairs without asking our advice or summoning our aid, there were hyphenated citizens in New York and elsewhere who deeply resented such independent action, and who have shown ever since a bitter unfriendliness to their own kith and kin. Even Mr.

Cosgrave's burst of Gaelic eloquence before the League of Nations, which should have melted a heart of flint, was powerless to allay their ill-temper.

If well-meaning counsellors could be persuaded that there are phenomena upon which they are not all qualified to give advice, they might perhaps forbear to send delegations of children to the White House. This is a popular diversion, and one which is much to be deplored. In the hour of our utmost depression, when our rights as a free nation were denied us, and the lives of our citizens were imperilled on land and sea, a number of children were sent to Mr. Wilson, to ask him not to go to war. It was as though they had asked him not to play games on Sunday, or not to put Christmas candles in his windows. Three years later, another deputation of innocents marched past the White House, bearing banners with severely worded directions from their

mothers as to how the President (then a very ill man) should conduct himself. The language used was of reprehensible rudeness. The exhortations themselves appeared to be irrelevant. "American women demand that anarchy in the White House be stopped!" puzzled the onlookers, who wondered what was happening in that sad abode of pain, what women these were who knew so much about it, and why a children's crusade had been organized for the control of our foreign and domestic policies.

The last query is the easiest answered. Picketing is a survival of the childish instinct in the human heart. It represents the play-spirit about which modern educators talk so glibly, and which we are bidden to cherish and preserve. A society of "American Women Pickets" (delightful phrase!) is out to enjoy itself, and its pleasures are as simple as they are satisfying. To parade the

streets, to proffer impertinent instructions, to be stared at by passers-by, and to elude the law which seeks to abate public nuisances — what better sport could be asked either for little boys and girls, or for Peter Pans valiantly refusing to mature? Mr. Harding was pursued in his day by picketing children, and Mr. Coolidge has probably the same pleasure awaiting him. Even the tomb at Mount Vernon has been surrounded by malcontents, bearing banners with the inscription, "Washington, Thou Art Truly Dead!" To which the mighty shade, who in his day had heard too often the sound and fury of importunate counsels, and who, because he would not hearken, had been abused like "a Nero, a defaulter and a pickpocket," might well have answered from the safety and dignity of the tomb, "Deo gratias!"

When a private citizen calls at the White House, to "frankly advise" a

modification of the peace treaty; when a private citizen writes to the American Bar Association, to "frankly advise" this distinguished body of men to forbear from any discussion of public affairs at their annual meeting; when a private citizeness writes to the Secretary of War to "frankly advise" that he should treat the slacker of to-day as he would treat the hero of to-morrow, we begin to realize how far the individual American is prepared to dry-nurse the Nation. Every land has its torch-bearers, but nowhere else do they all profess to carry the sacred fire. It is difficult to admonish Frenchmen. Their habit of mind is unfavourable to preachment. We can hardly conceive a delegation of little French girls sent to tell M. Millerand what their mothers think of him. Even England shows herself at times impatient of her monitors. "Mr. Norman Angell is very cross," observed a British reviewer dryly. "Europe is

behaving in her old mad way without having previously consulted him."

"Causes are the proper subject of history," says Mr. Brownell, "and characteristics are the proper subject of criticism." It may be that much of our criticism is beside the mark, because we disregard the weight of history. Our fresh enthusiasm for small nations is dependent upon their docility, and upon their respect for boundary lines which the big nations have painstakingly defined. That a boundary which has been fought over for centuries should be more provocative of dispute than a claim staked off in Montana does not occur to an American who has little interest in events that antedate the Declaration of Independence. Countries, small, weak and incredibly old, whose sons are untaught and unfed, appear to be eager for supplies and insensible to moral leadership. We recognize these characteristics, and

resent or deplore them according to our dispositions; but for an explanation of the causes — which might prove enlightening — we must go further back than Americans care to travel.

"I seldom consult others, and am seldom attended to; and I know no concern, either public or private, that has been mended or bettered by my advice." So wrote Montaigne placidly in the great days of disputation, when men counselled the doubtful with sword and gun, reasoning in platoons, and correcting theological errors with the all-powerful argument of arms. Few men were then guilty of intolerance, and fewer still understood with Montaigne and Burton the irreclaimable obstinacy of convictions. There reigned a profound confidence in intellectual and physical coercion. It was the opinion of John Donne, poet and pietist, that Satan was deeply indebted to the counsels of Saint Ignatius Loyola, which is a

higher claim for the intelligence of that great churchman than Catholics have ever advanced. Milton, whose ardent and compelling mind could not conceive of tolerance, failed to comprehend that Puritanism was out of accord with the main currents of English thought and temper. He not only assumed that his enemies were in the wrong, says Sir Leslie Stephen, "but he often seemed to expect that they would grant so obvious an assertion."

This sounds modern. It even sounds American. We are so confident that we are showing the way, we have been told so repeatedly that what we show *is* the way, that we cannot understand the reluctance of our neighbours to follow it. There is a curious game played by educators, which consists in sending *questionnaires* to some hundreds, or some thousands, of school-children, and tabulating their replies for the enlightenment of the adult public. The

precise purport of this game has never been defined; but its popularity impels us to envy the leisure that educators seem to enjoy. A few years ago twelve hundred and fourteen little Californians were asked if they made collections of any kind, and if so, what did they collect? The answers were such as might have been expected, with one exception. A small and innocently ironic boy wrote that he collected "bits of advice." His hoard was the only one that piqued curiosity; but, as in the case of Isacke Bucke and the quarrelsome couple of Plymouth, we were left to our own conjectures.

The fourth "Spiritual Work of Mercy" is "To comfort the sorrowful." How gentle and persuasive it sounds after its somewhat contentious predecessors; how sure its appeal; how gracious and reanimating its principle! The sorrowful are, after all, far in excess of the doubtful; they do not have

to be assailed; their sad faces are turned toward us, their sad hearts beat responsively to ours. The eddying drifts of counsel are loud with disputation; but the great tides of human emotion ebb and flow in obedience to forces that work in silence.

"The innocent moon, that nothing does but shine,
Moves all the labouring surges of the world."

Are Americans a Timid People?

AS the hare is timid — no! They have made good their fighting record in war. They have proved themselves over and over again to be tranquilly courageous in moments of acute peril. They have faced "their duty and their death" as composedly as Englishmen; and nobler comparison there is none. The sinking of the Titanic offered but one opportunity out of many for the display of a quality which is apt to be described in superlatives; but which is, nevertheless, an inherent principle of manhood. The protective instinct is strong in the native American. He does not prate about the sacredness of human life, because he knows, consciously or unconsciously, that the most sacred thing in life is the will to surrender it unfalteringly.

Of what then are Americans afraid, and what form does their timidity take? Mr. Harold Stearns puts the case coarsely and strongly when he affirms that our moral code resolves itself into fear of what people may say. With a profound and bitter distaste for things as they are, he bids us beware lest we confuse "the reformistic tendencies of our national life — Pollyanna optimism, prohibition, blue laws, clericalism, home and foreign missions, exaggerated reverence for women, with anything a civilized man can legitimately call moral idealism. . . . These manifestations are the fine flower of timidity, and fear, and ignorance."

Mr. Stearns is a robust writer. His antagonists, if he has any, need never fear the sharp thrust of an understatement. He recognizes the tyranny of opinion in the United States; but he does not do full justice to its serio-comic aspects, to the part it plays in

trivial as well as in august affairs, to the nervousness of our regard, to the absurdities of our subordination. There are successful newspapers and periodicals whose editors and contributors walk a chalked path, shunning facts, ignoring issues, avoiding the two things which spell life for all of us — men and customs — and triumphantly presenting a non-existent world to unobservant readers. Henry Adams said that the magazine-made female has not a feature that would have been recognized by Adam; but our first father's experience, while intimate and conclusive, was necessarily narrow. We have evolved a magazine-made universe, unfamiliar to the eyes of the earth-dweller, and unrelated to his soul.

When this country was pronounced to be too democratic for liberty, the epigram came as close to the truth as epigrams are ever permitted to come. Democracies have been systematically

praised because we stand committed to democratic tenets, and have no desire to foul our own roost. It is granted that equality, rather than freedom, is their animating principle. It is granted also that they are sometimes unfortunate in their representatives; that their legislative bodies are neither intelligent nor disinterested, and that their public service is apt to be distinguished for its incapacity. But with so much vigour and proficiency manifested every day in private ventures, we feel they can afford a fair share of departmental incompetence. The tremendous reserves of will and manhood, the incredible insufficiency of direction, which Mr. Wells remarked in democratic England when confronted by an overwhelming crisis, were equally apparent in the United States. It would seem as though a high average of individual force and intelligence failed to offer material for leadership.

The English, however, unlike Americans, refuse to survey with unconcern the spectacle of chaotic officialdom. They are a fault-finding people, and have expressed their dissatisfaction since the days of King John and the Magna Charta. They were no more encouraged to find fault than were other European commonalties that kept silence, or spoke in whispers. The Plantagenets were a high-handed race. The hot-tempered Tudors resented any opinions their subjects might form. Elizabeth had no more loyal servant than the unlucky John Stubbs, who lost his right hand for the doubtful pleasure of writing the "Gaping Gulf." Any other woman would have been touched when the culprit, raising his hat with his left hand which had been mercifully spared, cried aloud, "God save the Queen!" Not so the great Elizabeth. Stubbs had expressed his views upon her proposed marriage to

the Duke of Anjou, and it was no business of his to have views, much less to give them utterance; while his intimation that, at forty-six, she was unlikely to bear children was the most unpardonable truth he could have spoken.

The Stuarts, with the exception of the second Charles, were as resentful of candour as were the Tudors. "I hope," said James the First to his Commons, "that I shall hear no more about liberty of speech." The Hanoverians heartily disliked British frankness because they heartily disliked their unruly British subjects. George the Third had all Elizabeth's irascibility without her power to indulge it. And Victoria was not much behind either of them — witness her indignation at the "Greville Memoirs," "an insult to royalty," and her regret that the publishers were not open to prosecution.

It was no use. Nothing could keep the Englishman from speaking his

mind. With him it was not only "What is there that a man dare not do?" but "What is there that a man dare not say?" Many a time he paid more for the privilege than it was worth; but he handed it down to his sons, who took care that it was not lost through disuse. When Sorbière visited England in 1663, he was amazed to find the "common people" discussing public affairs in taverns and inns, recalling the glories as well as the discomforts of Cromwell's day, and grumbling over the taxes. "They do not forbear saying what they think of the king himself." In the "Memoirs" of the publisher, John Murray, there is an amusing letter from the Persian envoy, Mirza Abul Hassan, dated 1824, and expressing his opinion of a government which permitted such unrestrained liberty. Englishmen "do what they like, say what they like, write what they like in their newspapers," comments the Ori-

ental with bewildered but affectionate contempt. "How far do you think it safe to go in defying your sovereign?" asked Madame de Pompadour of John Wilkes, when that notorious plain-speaker had taken refuge in Paris from his incensed king and exasperated creditors. "That, Madame," said the member from Aylesbury, "is what I am trying to find out."

In our day the indifference of the British Government to what used to be called "treasonable utterances" has in it a galling element of contempt. Not that the utterances are invariably contemptible. Far from it. Blighting truths as well as extravagant senilities may still be heard in Hyde Park and Trafalgar Square. But the orators might be addressing their audiences in classic Greek for any token the London bobby gives of listening or comprehending. "Words are the daughters of earth; deeds are the sons of Heaven."

The bobby has never heard this grandiloquent definition; but he divides them as clearly in his own mind into hot air and disorderly conduct, and he takes his measures accordingly.

In the United States, as in all countries which enjoy a representative government, censure and praise run in familiar grooves. The party which is out sees nothing but graft and incapacity in the party which is in; and the party which is in sees nothing but greed and animosity in the party which is out. This antagonism is duly reflected by the press; and the job of arriving at a correct conclusion is left to the future historian. As an instance of the fashion in which history can be sidetracked by politics, the reader is referred to the portraits of Andrew Jackson as drawn by Mr. Beveridge in his "Life of John Marshall," and by Mr. Bowers in his "Party Battles of the Jackson Period."

The first lesson taught us by the

Great War was that we got nowhere in political leading-strings, and that none of our accustomed formulas covered this strange upheaval. It was like trying to make a correct survey of land which was being daily cracked by earthquakes. Our national timidity entrenched itself behind a wilful disregard of facts. It was content to view the conflict as a catastrophe for which nobody, or everybody, was to blame. Our national intrepidity manifested itself from the outset in a sense of human responsibility, in a bitter denial of our right to ignorance or indifference. The timidity was not an actual fear of getting hurt; the intrepidity was not insensitiveness to danger. What tore our Nation asunder was the question of accepting or evading a challenge which had — so we at first thought — only a spiritual significance.

In one of Birmingham's most genially nonsensical stories, "The Island Mys-

tery," there is an American gentleman named Donovan. He is rich, elderly, good-tempered, brave, kind and humorous; as blameless in his private life as King Arthur, as corrupt politically and financially as Tweed or Fiske; a buyer of men's souls in the market-place, a gentle, profound and invulnerable cynic. To him a young Irishman sets forth the value of certain things well worth the surrender of life; but the old American smiles away such a primitive mode of reckoning. The salient article of his creed is that nothing should be paid for in blood that can be bought for money; and that, as every man has his price, money, if there is enough of it, will buy the world. He is never betrayed, however, into a callous word, being mindful always of the phraseology of the press and platform; and the reader is made to understand that long acquaintance with such phraseology has brought him close to believing his own pretences. "In the

Middle West where I was raised," he observes mildly, "we don't think guns and shooting the proper way of settling national differences. We've advanced beyond those ideas. We're a civilized people, especially in the dry States, where university education is common, and the influence of women permeates elections. We've attained a nobler outlook upon life." It reads like a humorous illustration of Mr. Stearns's unhumorous invectives.

Sociologists are wont to point to the American public as a remarkable instance of the herd mind — a mind not to be utterly despised. It makes for solidity, if not for enlightenment. It is the most economical way of thinking; it saves trouble and it saves noise. So acute an observer as Lord Chesterfield set store by it as unlikely to disturb the peace of society; so practical a statesman as Sir Robert Walpole found it the best substratum upon which to rear the

fabric of constitutional government. It is most satisfactory and most popular when void of all sentiment save such as can be expressed by a carnation on Mother's Day, or by the social activities of an Old Home Week. Strong emotions are as admittedly insubordinate as strong convictions. "A world full of patriots," sighs the peace-loving Honourable Bertrand Russell, "may be a world full of strife." This is true. A single patriot has been known to breed strife in plenty. Who can measure the blood poured out in the cause that Wallace led, the "sacred" human lives sacrificed at his behest, the devastations that marked his victories and defeats? And all that came of such regrettable disturbances were a gallows at Smithfield, a name that shines like a star in the murk of history, and a deathless impulse to freedom in the hearts of a brave people.

The herd mind is essentially and inevitably a timid mind. Mr. Sinclair

Lewis has analyzed it with relentless acumen in his amazing novel, "Babbitt." The worthy citizen who gives his name to the story has reached middle age without any crying need to think for himself. His church and his newspaper have supplied his religious and political creeds. If there are any gaps left in his mind, they are filled up at his business club, or at his "lodge," that kindly institution designed to give "the swaddled American husband" a chance to escape from home one night in the week. Church, newspaper, club and lodge afford a supply of ready-made phrases which pass muster for principles as well as for conversation.

Yet stirring sluggishly in Babbitt's blood are a spirit of revolt, a regard for justice, and a love of freedom. He does not want to join the Good Citizens' League, and he refuses to be coerced into membership. He does not like the word "Vigilante," or the thing it repre-

sents. His own sane instinct rejects the tyranny of the conservative rich and of the anarchical poor. He dimly respects Seneca Doane and Professor Brockbank when he sees them marching in the strikers' parade. "Nothing in it for them, not a cent!" But his distaste for the strikers themselves, for any body of men who obstruct the pleasant ways of prosperity, remains unchanged. In the end — and it is an end which comes quickly — he finds that the one thing unendurable to his soul is isolation. Cut off from the thought currents of his group, he is chilled, lonely, and beset by a vague uneasiness. He yields, and he yields without a pang, glad to get back into the warm familiar atmosphere of class complacency, of smugness, of "safety first"; glad to sacrifice a wavering idealism and a purposeless independence for the solid substance of smooth living and conformity to his neighbours' point of view.

The curious thing about Mr. Lewis's analysis is that back of the contempt he strives to awaken in our souls is a suspicion that Babbitt's herd mind, the mind of many thousands of Americans, is, on the whole, a safe mind for the country. It will not raise us to any intellectual or spiritual heights, but neither will it plunge us into ruin. It is not making trouble for itself, or for the rest of the world. In its dull, imperfect way it represents the static forces of society. Sudden and violent change is hostile to its spirit. It may be trusted to create a certain measure of commercial prosperity, to provide work for workers, and safety for securities. It is not without regard for education, and it delights in practical science — the science which speeds transit, or which collects, preserves and distributes the noises of the world. It permits artists and authors to earn their daily bread, which is as much as artists and authors

have any business to expect, and which is a very precious privilege. In revolutionary Russia, the intelligentsia were the first to starve, an unpleasant reminder of possibilities.

What Mr. Lewis implies is that, outside of the herd mind he is considering, may be found understanding and a sense of fair play. But this is an unwarranted assumption. The intelligence of the country — and of the world — is a limited quantity; and fair play is less characteristic of groups than of individuals. Katharine Fullerton Gerould, in an immensely discontented paper entitled "The Land of the Free," presents the reverse of Mr. Lewis's medal. She contends that, as a people, we have "learned fear," and that, while England has kept the traditions of freedom (a point on which Mr. Chesterton vehemently disagrees with her), we are content with its rhetoric. But she finds us terrorized by labour as

well as by capital, by reformers and theorists as well as by the unbudging conservative. Fanatics, she says, are no longer negligible. They have learned how to control votes by organizing ignorance and hysteria. "In company with your most intimate friends you may lift amused eyebrows over the Fundamentalists, over the anti-cigarette organization, over the film censors, over the people who wish to shape our foreign policy in the interests of Methodism, over the people who wish to cut 'The Merchant of Venice' out of school editions of Shakespeare. But it is only in company with your most intimate friends that you can do this. If you do it in public, you are going to be persecuted. You are sure, at the very least, to be called 'un-American.'"

It is a bearable misfortune to be called un-American, because the phrase still waits analysis. The only sure way to escape it is by stepping warily — as

in an egg-dance — among the complicated interests sacred to democracies. The agile egg-dancer, aware that there is nothing in the world so sensitive as a voter (Shelley's coddled plant was a hardy annual by comparison), discountenances plain speech on any subject, as liable to awaken antagonism. There is no telling whom it may hit, and there is no calculating the return blows. "To covet the truth is a very distinguished passion," observes Santayana. It has burned in the bosom of man, but not in the corporate bosoms of municipalities and legislative bodies. A world of vested interests is not a world which welcomes the disruptive force of candour.

The plain-speaker may, for example, offend the Jews; and nothing can be more manifestly unwise than to give umbrage to a people, thin-skinned, powerful and clannish, who hold the purse-strings of the country. Look

what happened to Sargent's fresco in the Boston Library, which angered the Synagogue it inadequately represented. Or he may offend the Irish, who control wards, and councils, and local elections; and who, being always prompt to retaliate, are best kept in a good humour. Or he may offend either the Methodists or the Roman Catholics, powerful factors in politics, both of them, and capable of dealing knock-down blows. A presidential election was once lost and won through an unpardonable affront to Catholicism; and are we not now drinking soda-fountain beverages in obedience to the mandates of religious bodies, of which the Methodists are the most closely organized and aggressive?

It is well to consider these things, and the American press does very soberly and seriously consider them. The Boston "Transcript" ventured, it is true, to protest against the ruling of the

Navy Department which gave to Jewish seamen of the ancient faith three days' leave of absence, from the thirty-first of March, 1923, to the second of April, with such "additional time" as was practicable, that they might attend the rites of the Synagogue; while Gentile seamen of the Christian faith enjoyed no such religious privileges. The newspapers in general, however, discreetly avoided this issue. "Life" pointed out with a chuckle that the people who disapproved of President Lowell's decision to exclude negroes from the Harvard Freshman dormitories "rose up and slammed him"; while the people who approved were "less vocal." When Rear Admiral Sims said disconcertingly: "The Kentucky is not a battleship at all. She is the worst crime in naval construction ever perpetrated by the white race"; even those reviewers who admitted that the Admiral knew a battleship when he

saw one, were more ready to soften his words than to uphold them.

The negro is a man and a brother. He is also a voter, and as such merits consideration. There is no more popular appeal throughout the length and breadth of the North than that of fairness to the coloured citizen. Volumes have been written about his rights; but who save President Roosevelt ever linked responsibilities with rights, duties with deliverance? Who, at least, save President Roosevelt ever paused in the midst of a scathing denunciation of the crime of lynching (a stain on the Nation's honour and a blight on the Nation's rectitude) to remind the black man that his part of the contract was to deliver up the felon to justice, that his duty to his country, his race, and his manhood was to refuse all sanctuary to crime? A few years ago an acute negro policeman in Philadelphia recognized and trapped a negro criminal. For this

he received his full measure of commendation; but he also received threatening letters from other negroes whose simple conception of a policeman's part was the giving of shelter and protection to offenders of his own race.

The nastiest bit of hypocrisy ever put forward by wrong-doers was the cant of the early slave-dealers about Christianity and the negroes' souls. The slaves were Christianized by thousands, and took kindly to their new creed; but their spiritual welfare was not a controlling factor in the commerce which supplied the Southern States with labour. That four fifths of the labourers were better off in America than they would have been in Africa was a circumstance equally unfit to be offered as a palliative by civilized men. The inherent injustice of slavery lay too deep for vindication. But now that the great wrong has been righted (and that three hundred thousand white

men laid down their lives in the righting is a fact which deserves to be remembered), now that the American negroes are free, Christian, educated, and privileged (like artists and authors) to earn their daily bread, they cannot candidly regret that their remote ancestors had not been left unmolested on the coast of Guinea. They have their grievances; but they are the most fortunate of their race. The debt the white men owed them has been paid. There is left a mutual dependence on the law, a mutual obligation of self-imposed decency of behaviour from which not even voters are exempt.

Timidity is superimposed upon certain classes of men who are either tied up with red tape, like teachers, soldiers and sailors, or unduly dependent upon other men, like legislators, and like clerics in those churches which are strong enough to control the insubordinations of the pulpit. Of all these

classes, legislators are the worst off, because their dependence is the most ignoble and disastrous. So long as a future election is the controlling influence in their lives, they have no alternative but to truckle to any compact body of voters that bullies them into subjection. So long as they take for their slogan, "We aim to please," they must pay out their manhood for the privilege of pleasing. In 1923 Senator Borah charged Congress with "organized cowardice" in the matter of the soldiers' bonus. It was a borrowed phrase neatly refitted. The spectacle of a body of lawmakers doubling and turning like a hare in its efforts to satisfy the servicemen without annoying the taxpayer struck the Senator — and others — as the kind of exaggerated subjection which paves the way to anarchy.

Timidity was as alien to the soul of Henry Adams as it is alien to the soul of

Admiral Sims. He was not a man who skirted the hard places on the road, or who was so busy keeping both feet on the ground that he feared to take a step. But he was conscious of the inquisitorial spirit which is part of the righteousness of America, and which keeps watch and ward over all the schooling of the country. "Education," he wrote, "like politics, is a rough affair, and every instructor has to shut his eyes and hold his tongue as though he were a priest."

The policy of shutting one's eyes and holding one's tongue is highly esteemed in all professions, and in all departments of public service. The man who can hear black called white without fussily suggesting that perhaps it is only grey; the man who evades responsibility, and eschews inside criticism (like the criticism of a battleship by an admiral); the man who never tells an unpalatable truth "at the wrong time"

(the right time has yet to be discovered), is the man whose success in life is fairly well assured. There is an optimism which nobly anticipates the eventual triumph of great moral laws, and there is an optimism which cheerfully tolerates unworthiness. The first belongs to brave and lonely men; the second is the endearing quality of men whose sagging energy and cautious content can be trusted to make no trouble for their kind.

The plain-speaking of soldiers and sailors is reprobated and punished, but their discretion is less conspicuously rewarded. They are expected to be undeviatingly brave in the field and at sea; but timorous and heedful when not engaged in fighting their country's enemies. They are at a disadvantage in times of peace, strait-jacketed by rules and regulations, regarded with suspicion by sociologists, with hostility by pacifists, with jealousy by politi-

cians. A grateful Republic dismisses the men who fought for her, and cherishes her army of office-holders. When General Wood and Admiral Sims spoke some unpleasant truths, nobody ventured to call these truths lies; but everybody said that General Wood and Admiral Sims were not the proper persons to speak them. As the proper persons to speak them never would have spoken them, the country would have been spared the discomfort of listening, and the "common quiet," which is mankind's concern, would have been undisturbed.

So far, then, is Mr. Harold Stearns right in accusing us as a nation of timidity. So far, then, is Mrs. Gerould right in accusing us of exaggerated prudence. That something akin to timidity has crept into the hearts of Englishmen, who are fortified by a long tradition of freedom and common sense, is evidenced by the title given to two

recent volumes of scholarly, and by no means revolutionary, papers, "Outspoken Essays." Frankness must be at a discount when it becomes self-conscious, and constitutes a claim to regard. The early essayists were fairly outspoken without calling anybody's attention to the fact. The contributors to those great and grim "Reviews" which so long held the public ear were outspoken to the verge of brutality. A comfortless candour was their long suit. Never before in the history of English letters has this quality been so rare as to be formally adopted and proclaimed.

Santayana, analyzing the essentials of independence, comes to the discouraging conclusion that liberty of speech and liberty to elect our lawmakers do not materially help us to live after our own minds. This he holds to be the only positive and worthwhile form of freedom. He aims high.

Are Americans Timid?

Very few of us can live after our own minds, because the tyranny of opinion is reënforced by the tyranny of circumstance. But none of us can hope to live after our own minds unless we are free to speak our own minds; to speak them, not only in the company of friends (which is all Mrs. Gerould grants us), but openly in the market-place; and not with a blast of defiance, but calmly as in the exercise of an unquestioned prerogative. Under no other circumstance is it possible to say anything of value or of distinction. Under no other circumstance can we enjoy the luxury of self-respect. There is an occasional affectation of courage and candour on the part of those who know they are striking a popular note; but to dare to be unpopular, "in the best and noblest sense of a good and noble word," is to hold fast to the principles which speeded the Mayflower to Plymouth Rock, and Penn to the shores of the Delaware.

The Happiness of Writing an Autobiography

MR. EDMUND GOSSE, commenting on the lack of literary curiosity in the early years of the seventeenth century, ascribes it to a growing desire for real knowledge, to an increasing seriousness of mind. Men read travels, history, philosophy, theology. "There were interesting people to be met with, but there were no Boswells. Sir Aston Cokayne mentions that he knew all the men of his time, and could have written their lives, had it been worth his while. Instead of doing this, the exasperating creature wrote bad epigrams and dreary tragicomedies."

A century later, when literary curiosity had in some measure revived, Sir Walter Scott, losing his temper over Richard Cumberland's "Memoirs,"

wrote of their author in the "Quarterly Review": "He has pandered to the public lust for personal anecdote by publishing his own life, and the private history of his acquaintances."

A better illustration of La Fontaine's wisest fable, "The Miller, his Son, and the Ass," could not anywhere be found. The only way to please everybody is to have no ass; that is, to print nothing, and leave the world at peace. But as authorship is a trade by which men seek to live, they must in some way get their beast to market, and be criticized accordingly.

It is probable that the increasing vogue of biography, the amazing output of books about men and women of meagre attainments and flickering celebrity, sets the modern autobiographer at work.

> "For now the dentist cannot die,
> And leave his forceps as of old,
> But round him, ere his clay be cold,
> Is spun the vast biography."

The astute dentist says very sensibly: "If there is any money to be made out of me, why not make it myself? If there is any gossip to be told about me, why not tell it myself? If modesty restrains me from praising myself as highly as I should expect a biographer to praise me, prudence dictates the ignoring of circumstances which an indiscreet biographer might drag into the light. I am, to say the least, as safe in my own hands as I should be in anybody else's; and I shall, moreover, enjoy the pleasure dearest to the heart of man, the pleasure of talking about myself in the terms that suit me best."

Perhaps it is this open-hearted enjoyment which communicates itself to the reader, if he has a generous disposition, and likes to see other people have a good time. Even the titles of certain autobiographical works are saturated with self-appreciation. We can see the august simper with which a great lady

in the days of Charles the Second headed her manuscript: "A True Relation of the Birth, Breeding and Life of Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle. Written by Herself." Mr. Theodore Dreiser's "A Book About Myself" sounds like nothing but a loud human purr. The intimate wording of "Margot Asquith, An Autobiography," gives the key to all the cheerful confidences that follow. Never before or since has any book been so much relished by its author. She makes no foolish pretence of concealing the pleasure that it gives her; but passes on with radiant satisfaction from episode to episode, extracting from each in turn its full and flattering significance. The volumes are as devoid of revelations as of reticence. If at times they resemble the dance of the seven veils, the reader is invariably reassured when the last veil has been whisked aside, and he sees there is nothing behind it.

The happiness of writing an autobiography which is going to be published and read is a simple and comprehensible emotion. Before books were invented, men carved on stone something of a vainglorious nature about themselves, and expected their subjects, or their neighbours, to decipher it. But there is a deeper and subtler gratification in writing an autobiography which seeks no immediate public, and contents itself with the expression of a profound and indulged egotism. Marie Bashkirtseff has been reproached for making the world her father confessor; but the reproach seems hardly justified in view of the fact that the "Journal," although "meant to be read," was never thrust by its author upon readers, and was not published until six years after her death. She was, although barely out of girlhood, as complex as Mrs. Asquith is simple and robust. She possessed, moreover, gen-

uine intellectual and artistic gifts. The immensity of her self-love and self-pity (she could be more sorry for her own troubles than anybody who ever lived) steeped her pages in an ignoble emotionalism. She was often unhappy; but she revelled in her unhappiness, and summoned the Almighty to give it his serious attention. Her overmastering interest in herself made writing about herself a secret and passionate delight.

There must always be a different standard for the confessions which, like Rousseau's, are made voluntarily to the world, and the confessions which, like Mr. Pepys's, are disinterred by the world from the caches where the confessants concealed them. Not content with writing in a cipher, which must have been a deal of trouble, the great diarist confided his most shameless passages to the additional cover of Spanish, French, Greek and Latin,

thus piquing the curiosity of a public which likes nothing better than to penetrate secrets and rifle tombs. He had been dead one hundred and twenty-two years before the first part of his diary was printed. Fifty years later, it was considerably enlarged. One hundred and ninety years after the garrulous Secretary of the Admiralty had passed into the eternal silences, the record of his life (of that portion of it which he deemed worth recording) was given unreservedly to English readers. The "Diary" is what it is because of the manner of the writing. Mr. Lang says that of all who have gossiped about themselves, Pepys alone tells the truth. Naturally. If one does not tell the truth in a Greek cipher, when shall the truth be told?

The severe strictures passed by George Eliot upon autobiographies are directed against scandal-mongering no less than against personal outpourings.

She could have had the English-speaking world for a confidant had she consented to confide to it; but nothing was less to her liking. She objected to "volunteered and picked confessions," as in their nature insincere, and also as conveying, directly or indirectly, accusations against others. Her natural impulse was to veil her own soul — which was often sick and sore — from scrutiny; and, being a person of limited sympathies, she begrudged her neighbour the privilege of exhibiting his soul, sores and all, to the public. The struggle of human nature "to bury its lowest faculties," over which she cast unbroken silence, is what the egotist wants to reveal, and the public wants to observe. When Nietzsche says debonairly of himself, "I have had no experience of religious difficulties, and have never known what it was to feel sinful," the statement, though probably untrue, creates at once an atmosphere of flat-

ness. It is what Walt Whitman ardently admired in beasts —

"They do not lie awake in the dark, and weep for their sins,
They do not make me sick discussing their duty to God."

Next to the pleasure of writing lovingly about ourselves — but not comparable to it — is the pleasure of writing unlovingly about our fellows. Next to the joy of the egotist is the joy of the detractor. I think that the last years of Saint-Simon, those sad impoverished years when he lived forgotten by his world, must have been tremendously cheered by the certainty that, sooner or later, the public would read his memoirs. Nobody knows with what patient labour, and from what devious sources he collected his material; but we can all divine the secret zest with which he penned his brilliant, malicious, sympathetic, truth-telling pages. Thirty years after his death some of these

pages crept cautiously into print; but a full hundred years had passed before the whole text was given to the world. Perhaps the dying French gentleman anticipated no earlier resurrection for his buried manuscript; but he knew his nation and he knew his work. The nation and the work were bound to meet.

A somewhat similar satisfaction must have stolen into the heart of Charles Greville when he wrote the last pages of his diary, and laid it aside for future publication. Nineteenth-century England presented none of the restrictions common to eighteenth-century France; and ten years after Greville's death the first instalment of the ever-famous "Memoirs" exploded like a bomb in the serried ranks of British official and fashionable life. It shook, not the security, but the complacency of the Queen on her throne. It was an intelligent and impartial picture of the times; and there is nothing that people

like less than to be intelligently and impartially described. Moreover, the writer was no anonymous critic whose words came unweighted by authority, no mere man of letters whom men of affairs could ignore. He had lived in the heart of administrative England, and he knew whereof he spoke.

Lord Hervey's memoirs are not autobiographical at all: they are historical, like the memoirs of Sully, and Jean de Joinville, and Philippe de Comines. They are very properly entitled "Memoirs of the Reign of George the Second," and what their author did not know about that interesting reign (as seen from the angle of the Court) was not worth the knowing. Historians have made free use of his material; and some of those to whom it has been most valuable, like Thackeray, have harshly depreciated the chronicler. Dr. Jowett, in a moment of cynical misgiving, said that every amusing story must of

necessity be unkind, untrue, or immoral. Hervey's stories are not untrue, and not often immoral; but they *are* unkind. What did he see about him of which he could consistently write with kindness? His sharpest thrusts have a careless quality which redeems them from the charge of vindictiveness. When he says of Frederick, Prince of Wales, "He was as false as his capacity would allow him to be," it sounds like an observation passed with casual unconcern upon a natural phenomenon which had chanced to come under his notice.

Sully was a maker of history as well as a writer of history. He had no taste and no time for self-analysis, and, like Joinville, he had the rare good fortune to serve a master whom he sincerely loved and admired. Comines also admired his master, but he did not love him. Nobody has yet been put on record as loving Louis the Eleventh. All

these men wrote with candour and acumen. No pleasure which they can have taken in compiling their memoirs can equal, or even approach, the pleasure with which we read them. Their accuracy is the accuracy of the observer, not of the antiquarian. "In my opinion," writes Comines, "you who lived in the age when these affairs were transacted have no need to be informed of the exact hours when everything was done." "I now make known to my readers," observes Joinville composedly, "that all they shall find in this book which I have declared I have seen and known, is true, and what they ought most firmly to believe. As for such things as I have mentioned as hearsay, they may understand them as they please."

These excursions into the diversified region of the memoir lead us away from the straight and narrow path of the autobiography. These saunterings

along the pleasant byways of history distract us from the consideration of the human soul, as shown us by its too ecstatic possessor. We know as much as we need to know about the souls of Lord Hervey, and Sully, and of the Sire de Joinville, which was really a beautiful article; but we know a great deal more about the souls of George the Second, and Henry of Navarre, and of Saint Louis, shining starlike through the centuries. What we gain is better worth having than what we lose.

When we read the true autobiography, as that of Benvenuto Cellini, we see the august men of the period assume a secondary place, a shadowy significance. They patronize the artist or imprison him, according to their bent. They give him purses of five hundred ducats when they are complacent, and they banish him from their very limited domains when he kills somebody whom they prefer to keep alive.

But not for one moment is our attention distracted from the narrator himself to these rude arbiters of fate. He makes it plain to us from the start that he is penning his autobiography in a spirit of composed enjoyment, and because he deems it "incumbent upon upright men who have performed anything noble or praiseworthy to record with their own hand the events of their lives." He tells us in detail how it pleased God that he should come into the world; and he tells us of all that he has done to make God's action in the matter a source of regret, as well as of satisfaction, to others. Those true words of Frederick the Great, "On peut apprendre de bonnes choses d'un scélérat," are singularly applicable to this particular rascal. It is as difficult to find standards by which to appraise his worth as it is to find rules by which to test his accuracy. Just as it has been said of Rousseau, that even in the very

ecstasy of truth-telling he does not tell the truth, so it may be said of Cellini, that even in the very ecstasy of lying he does not wholly lie.

It is characteristic of a simpler age than the one we live in now that autobiographers sang their own praises candidly and lustily. Cellini puts graceful eulogies of himself into the mouths of his contemporaries, which is one way, and a very good way, of getting them said. The Duchesse de Montpensier (La Grande Mademoiselle) goes a step further, and assures us that the Creator is sympathetically aware of her merits and importance. "I may say without vanity that just Heaven would not bestow such a woman as I am upon a man who was unworthy of her." Wilhelmina, Margravine of Baireuth, and sister of Frederick the Great, writes with composure: "Happily my good disposition was stronger than the bad example of my governess"; and, as

the testimony of the governess was not taken, Wilhelmina's carries the day.

This directness contrasts pleasantly with the more involved, and possibly more judicious, methods employed by memoir-writers like Richard Lovell Edgeworth, father of the immortal Maria, and by autobiographers like Harriet Martineau. Mr. Edgeworth, recounting his first experience of married life, says with conscious nobility: "I felt the inconvenience of an early and hasty marriage; and though I heartily repented of my folly, I determined to bear with fortitude and temper the evil I had brought upon myself."

Miss Martineau, whose voluminous work is ranked by Anna Robeson Burr as among the great autobiographies of the world, does not condescend to naïveté; but she never forgets, or permits her reader to forget, what a superior person she is. When Miss

Aiken ventures to congratulate her upon her "success" in London society, she loftily repudiates the word. Success implies endeavour, and she (Harriet Martineau) has "nothing to strive for in any such direction." When she sails for the United States, it is with the avowed purpose of "self-discipline." She has become "too much accustomed to luxury," and seeks for wholesome hardships. It sounds a trifle far-fetched. Byron — an incomparable traveller — admits that folks who go "a-pleasuring" in the world must not ask for comfort; but even Byron did not visit the East in order to be uncomfortable. He was not hunting a corrective for St. James Street and Piccadilly.

There is no finer example in the world of the happiness of writing an autobiography than that afforded us by Miss Martineau. Her book is a real book, not an ephemeral piece of self-flattery. Her enjoyment of it is so

intense that it impedes her progress. She cannot get on with her narrative because of the delight of lingering. Every circumstance of an uneventful childhood invites her attention. Other little girls cry now and then. Mothers and nurserymaids are aware of this fact. Other little girls hate to get up in the morning. Other little girls are occasionally impertinent to their parents. But no one else has ever recorded these details with such serious and sympathetic concern. A petulant word from an older sister (most of us have lived through something of the kind) made her resolve "never to tell anybody anything again." This resolution was broken. She has told everybody everything, and the telling must have given her days, and weeks, and months of undiluted pleasure.

Miss Martineau's life was in the main a successful one. It is natural that she should have liked to think about it, and

write about it. But Mrs. Oliphant, a far more brilliant woman, was overburdened, overworked, always anxious, and often very unhappy. Arthur Young was a melancholy, disgruntled man, at odds with himself, his surroundings, and the world. The painter, Haydon, lived through years so harassed by poverty, so untempered by discretion, so embittered by disappointments, that his tragic suicide was the only thing which could have brought his manifold miseries to an end. Yet Mrs. Oliphant took comfort in setting forth her difficulties, and in expressing a reasonable self-pity. Arthur Young relieved his mind by a well-worked-out system of intensive grumbling. Even Haydon seems to have sought and found a dreary solace in the recital of his woes. The fragment of autobiography is painful to read, but was evidently the one poor consolation of its writer's life.

That George Sand's "Histoire de Ma Vie" afforded its author more than her proper share of contentment is evidenced by its length, and by the relish which is stamped on every page. Sir Leslie Stephen pronounced it the best autobiography he had ever read. It seems to have delighted him as Rousseau's "Confessions" delighted Emerson; which goes to prove that intellectual kinship need not necessarily be accompanied by any similarity of taste. "If we would really know our hearts," says Bishop Wilson, "let us impartially review our actions." George Sand and Rousseau reviewed their actions with the fondest solicitude; but were biased in their own favour. Gibbon reviewed his actions, and such emotions as he was aware of, with an impartiality that staggers us; but his heart, at no time an intrusive organ, gave him little concern. Franklin, with whom truth-telling was never an "ecstasy," but a nat-

ural process like breathing and eating, reviewed his actions candidly, if not altogether impartially, and left the record without boast, or apology, or the reticence dictated by taste, to the judgment of coming generations. He was a busy man, engaged, like Sully, in making history on a large scale. It pleased him, not only to write his recollections, but to bequeath them, as he bequeathed so much else, to the young nation that he loved. He never sought to patent his inventions. He never sought to publish his autobiography. His large outlook embraced the future, and America was his residuary legatee.

John Wesley kept a journal for fifty-five years. This is one of the most amazing facts in the history of letters. He was beyond comparison the hardest worker of his day. John Stuart Mill, who knew too much and did too much for any one man, also wrote an autobiography, which the reading world

has been content to ignore. But Mill's failing health compelled him sometimes to rest. Wesley never rested. It is estimated that for over thirty years he rode, on an average, eight thousand miles a year. He preached in his lifetime full thirty thousand sermons — an overwhelming and relentless figure. He wrestled with lagging Churchmen of the Establishment no less than with zealous Antinomians, Swedenborgians, Necessitarians, Anabaptists and Quakers. Other records of human endeavour read like the idling of a summer day alongside of his supernatural activities. Yet so great is the compulsion of the born diarist to confide to the world the history of his thoughts and deeds that Wesley found time — or took time — to write, in a minute, cryptic shorthand, a diary which fills seven large volumes. He not only wanted to do this; he *had* to do it. The narrative, now bald and itemized, now stirring

and spirited, now poignant and terrible, was part of himself. He might have said of it more truly than Walt Whitman said of "Leaves of Grass," that whoever laid hold upon the book laid hold upon a man.

To ask that the autobiographer should "know himself as a realist, and deal with himself as an artist," is one way of demanding perfection. Realists are plentiful, and their ranks are freshly recruited every year. Artists are rare, and grow always rarer in an age which lacks the freedom, the serenity, the sense of proportion, essential to their development. It has happened from time to time that a single powerful and sustained emotion has forced from a reticent nature an unreserved and illuminating disclosure. Newman's "Apologia pro Vita sua" was written with an avowed purpose — to make clear the sincerity of his religious life, and to refute a charge of deceitfulness.

The stern coercion which gave it birth, and which carried it to a triumphant close, was remote from any sense of enjoyment save such as might be found in clarity of thought and distinction of workmanship. The thrust of truth in this fragment of autobiography has carried it far; but it is not by truth alone that a book lives. It is not by simple veracity that minds "deeply moralized, discriminating and sad" have charmed, and will always charm, the few austere thinkers and fastidious critics whom a standardized world has spared.

The pleasure derived by ordinary readers from memoirs and reminiscences is twofold. It is the pleasure of acquiring agreeable information in an agreeable way, and it is, more rarely, the pleasure of a direct and penetrating mental stimulus. "The Education of Henry Adams" has so filtered through the intelligent public mind that echoes of it are still to be heard

in serious lectures and flippant after-dinner speeches. We can, if we are adroit borrowers, set up intellectual shop-keeping on Mr. Adams's stock-in-trade. We can deal out over our own counters his essentially marketable wares.

The simpler delight afforded us by such a charming book as Frederick Locker's "Confidences," which is not confidential at all; or by John Murray's well-bred "Memoirs of a Publisher"; or by Lord Broughton's "Recollections of a Long Life," is easy to estimate. We could ill spare Lord Broughton's volumes, both because he tells us things we do not learn elsewhere, and because of his illuminating common sense. The world of authorship has of late years so occupied itself with Lord Byron that we wince at the sound of his name. But if we really want to know him, we must still turn to Broughton for the knowledge. The account of Byron's wedding

in the "Recollections" is as unforgettable as the account of Byron's funeral in Moore's diffuse and rambling "Memoirs." It is in such narratives that the eye-witness eclipses, and must forever eclipse, the most acute and penetrating investigator. Biographers cannot stand as Broughton stood at the door of Seaham, when the ill-mated couple drove away to certain misery: "I felt as if I had buried a friend." Historians cannot stand as John Evelyn stood on the Strand, when the second Charles entered London: "I beheld him and blessed God!" Or at Gravesend, seven years later, when the Dutch fleet lay at the mouth of the Thames: "A dreadful spectacle as ever Englishmen saw, and a dishonour never to be wiped off!"

Ever since that most readable book, "An Apology for the Life of Mr. Colley Cibber, Comedian," was given to the English world, actors and playwrights have been indefatigable autobiogra-

phers. They may write about themselves alone, as did Macready, or about themselves and the world, after the fashion of Frances Kemble. They may be amusing, like Ellen Terry, or discursive, like Augustus Thomas, or casual, like John Drew. But they fall into line, and tell us what dramas they wrote, what companies they managed, what parts they played, and when and where they played them, together with any scraps of theatrical gossip they may be fortunate enough to recollect. All, at least, except the once celebrated Mrs. Inchbald. She recollected so much that the publisher, Phillips, offered her a thousand pounds for her manuscript; and her confessor, a wise and nameless Catholic priest, persuaded her to burn it unread. Yet there are people so perversely minded as to disapprove of auricular confession.

The golden age of the autobiographer has come, perhaps to stay. Mr. How-

ells, observant and sympathetic, welcomed its dawning, and the fullness of its promise. He was of the opinion that this form of composition represented "the supreme Christian contribution to literature"; and, while admitting that there were bad as well as good specimens of the art, he stoutly maintained that one more autobiography, however indifferent, was better than one less — a disputable point.

The question which confronts the reading public is this: "How far should the law of kindness, which we all profess to follow, influence us in allowing to our fellow creatures the happiness of writing books about themselves?" There is no use saying that it would be impossible to stop them. Nothing in the way of inhibitions is impossible to the United States. "There is no country," says the observant Santayana, "in which people live under more powerful compulsions."

Writing an Autobiography

Americans have so far been inclined to tolerate the vanity of the autobiography, because mankind is naturally vain, and to forgive its dullness, because life is frequently dull. Moreover, they are well disposed towards any form of art or letters that lays claim to the quality of truth; and it is generally conceded that a man knows himself better than others know him. He does not know, and he never can know, how he appears to his acquaintances. The sound of his own voice, the light in his own eye, his accent, his mannerisms, his laugh, the sensations, pleasurable or otherwise, which he produces by his presence — these things, apparent to every casual observer, are unfamiliar to him. But his *naturel* (a word too expressive for translation) which others must estimate by the help of circumstantial evidence, he can, if he be honest, know and judge.

This, at least, is the theory on which

rest the lucidity of art and the weight of conscience. Yet George Sand, who was given to self-inspection, self-analysis and self-applause, admitted the dimness of her inward vision. "The study of the human heart," she wrote, "is of such a nature, that the more we are absorbed by it, the less clearly do we see."

Strayed Sympathies

It is probably more instructive to entertain a sneaking kindness for any unpopular person than to give way to perfect raptures of moral indignation against his abstract vices. — Robert Louis Stevenson.

IT is not only more instructive — it is more enlivening. The conventionalities of criticism (moral, not literary, criticism) pass from mouth to mouth, and from pen to pen, until the iterations of the press are crystallized in encyclopædias and biographical dictionaries. And from such verdicts there is no appeal. Their laboured impartiality, their systematic adjustments, their careful avoidance of intuition, produce in the public mind a level sameness of misunderstanding. Many sensible people think this a good result. Even a man who did his own thinking, and maintained his own intellectual freehold, like Mr. Bagehot, knew and up-

held the value of ruts. He was well aware how far a little intelligence can be made to go, unless it aspires to originality. Therefore he grumbled at the paradoxes which were somewhat of a novelty in his day, but which are outworn in ours, at the making over of virtue into vice, and of vice into something more inspiriting than virtue. "We have palliations of Tiberius, eulogies on Henry the Eighth, devotional exercises to Cromwell, and fulsome adulations of the first Napoleon."

That was a half-century ago. To-day, Tiberius is not so much out of favour as out of mind; Mr. Froude was the last man really interested in the moral status of Henry the Eighth; Mr. Wells has given us his word for it that Napoleon was a very ordinary person; and the English people have erected a statue of Cromwell close to the Houses of Parliament, by way of reminding him (in his appointed place) of the survival of

representative government. The twentieth century does not lean to extravagant partialities. Its trend is to disparagement, to searchlights, to that lavish and ironic candour which no man's reputation can survive.

When Mr. Lytton Strachey reversed Mr. Stevenson's suggestion, and chose, as subject-matter of a book, four people of whom the world had heard little but good, who had been praised and reverenced beyond their deserts, but for whom he cherished a secret and cold hostility, he experimented successfully with the latent uncharitableness of men's minds. The brilliancy with which the four essays were written, the keenness of each assault, the charm and persuasiveness of the style, delighted even the uncensorious. The business of a biographer, said the author in a very engaging preface, is to maintain his own freedom of spirit, and lay bare events as he understands them, "dispassion-

ately, impartially, and without ulterior intentions."

It sounds fair and square; but the fact remains that Mr. Strachey disliked Manning, despised Arnold, had little sympathy with Gordon, and no great fancy for Florence Nightingale. It must be remembered also that in three cases out of four he was dealing with persons of stubborn character and compelling will, as far removed from irreproachable excellence as from criminality. Of such, much criticism may be offered; but the only way to keep an open outlook is to ask, "What was their life's job?" "How well did they do it?" Men and women who have a pressing job on hand (Florence Nightingale was *all* job) cannot afford to cultivate the minor virtues. They move with an irresistible impulse to their goal. It is a curious fact that Mr. Strachey is never so illuminating as when he turns his back upon these forceful and discon-

certing personages, and dallies with their more amenable contemporaries. What he writes about Gordon we should be glad to forget; what he writes about Sir Evelyn Baring and Lord Hartington we hope to remember while we live.

The popularity of "Eminent Victorians" inspired a host of followers. Critics began to look about them for other vulnerable reputations. Mr. J. A. Strahan, stepping back from Victoria to Anne, made the happy discovery that Addison had been systematically overpraised, and that every side of his character was open to assault. The result of this perspicuity is a damning denunciation of a man whom his contemporaries liked and esteemed, and concerning whom we have been content to take the word of those who knew him. He may have been, as Mr. Strahan asserts, a sot, a time-server, a toad-eater, a bad official and a worse friend; but he managed to give a different impres-

sion. Addison's friends and neighbours found him a modest, honourable, sweet-tempered gentleman; and Steele, whom he had affronted, wrote these generous words: "You can seldom get him to the tavern; but when once he is arrived to his pint, and begins to look about him, you admire a thousand things in him which before lay buried."

This seems to me a singularly pleasant thing to say about anybody. Were I coveting praise, this is the form I'd like the praise to take.

The pressure of disparagement, which is one result of the cooling of our blood after the fever-heat of war, is lowering our enthusiasms, thinning our sympathies, and giving us nothing very dazzling in the way of enlightenment. Americans are less critical than Englishmen, who so value their birthright of free speech that censure of public men has become a habit, a game of hazard (pulling planks out of the ship of state),

at which long practice has made them perfect. "The editor of the 'Morning Post,'" observed Mr. Maurice Hewlett wearily, "begins his day by wondering whom he shall denounce"; and opposing editors, as nimble at the fray, match outcry against outcry, and malice against malignity.

I doubt if any other than an Englishman could have written "The Mirrors of Downing Street," and I am sure that, were an American able to write such a book (which is problematic), it would never occur to him to think of it, or to brag of it, as a duty. The public actions of public men are open to discussion; but Mr. Balfour's personal selfishness, his parsimony, his indifference to his domestics, are not matters of general moment. To gossip about these things is to gossip with tradesmen and servants. To deny to Lord Kitchener "greatness of mind, greatness of character, and greatness of heart," is harsh

speaking of the dead; but to tell a gaping world that the woman "whom he loved hungrily and doggedly, and to whom he proposed several times, could never bring herself to marry him," is a personality which "Town Topics" would scorn. "The Mirrors of Downing Street" aspired to a moral purpose; but taste is the guardian of morality. Its delicate and severe dictates define the terms upon which we may improve the world at the expense of our neighbour's character.

The sneaking kindness recommended by Mr. Stevenson is much harder to come by than the "raptures of moral indignation," of which he heard more than he wanted, and which are reverberating through the world to-day. The pages of history are heavy with moral indignation. We teach it in our schools, and there are historians like Macaulay who thunder it rapturously, with never a moment of misgiving. But here and

there, as we step apprehensively into historic bypaths, we are cheered by patches of sunshine, straight glimpses into truths which put a more credible, because a more merciful, construction upon men's actions, and lighten our burden of dispraise.

I have often wondered why, with Philippe de Commines as an avenue of approach, all writers except Scott should deal with Louis the Eleventh as with a moral monstrosity. Commines is no apologist. He has a natural desire to speak well of his master; but he reviews every side of Louis's character with dispassionate sincerity.

First, as a Catholic: "The king was very liberal to the Church, and, in some respects, more so than was necessary, for he robbed the poor to give to the rich. But in this world no one can arrive at perfection."

Next, as a husband: "As for ladies, he never meddled with them in my

time; for when I came to his court he lost a son, at whose death he was greatly afflicted; and he made a vow to God in my presence never to have intercourse with any other woman than the queen. And though this was no more than he was bound to do by the canons of the Church, yet it was much that he should have such self-command as to persevere firmly in his resolution, considering that the queen (though an excellent lady in other respects) was not a princess in whom a man could take any great delight."

Finally, as a ruler: "The king was naturally kind and indulgent to persons of mean estate, and hostile to all great men who had no need of him. . . . But this I say boldly in his commendation, that in my whole life I never knew any man so wise in his misfortunes."

To be brave in misfortune is to be worthy of manhood; to be wise in misfortune is to conquer fate. We cannot

easily or advantageously regard Louis with affection; but when Commines epitomizes history in an ejaculation, "Our good master, Louis, whom God pardon!" it rests our souls to say, "Amen!"

We cannot easily love Swift. The great "professional hater" frightens us out of the timid regard which we should like — in honour of English literature — to cherish for his memory. But there is a noble sentence of Thackeray's which, if it does not soften our hearts, cannot fail to clarify our minds, to free us from the stupid, clogging misapprehension which we confuse with moral distaste. "Through the storms and tempests of his [Swift's] furious mind the stars of religion and love break out in the blue, shining serenely, though hidden by the driving clouds and maddening hurricane of his life." One clear and penetrating note ("Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came") is worth much careful auditing of accounts.

The picture of John Wilkes drawn by Sir George Otto Trevelyan in his "Early History of Charles James Fox," and the picture of Aaron Burr drawn by Mr. Albert J. Beveridge in his "Life of John Marshall," are happy illustrations of unpopular subjects treated with illuminating kindness. Wilkes was a demagogue and Burr a trouble-maker (the terms are not necessarily synonymous), and neither of them is a man whose history is widely or accurately known. Both historians are swayed by their political passions. An historian without political passions is as rare as a wasp without a sting. To Trevelyan all Conservatives were in fault, and all Liberals in the right. Opposition to George the Third is the acid test he applies to separate gold from dross. Mr. Beveridge regards the Federalists as the strength, and the Republicans as the weakness, of the young nation. Thomas Jefferson is *his* test, and a man

hated and hounded by Jefferson necessarily wins his support.

Nevertheless, Wilkes and Burr are presented to us by their sympathizers in a cold north light which softens and conceals nothing. Men of positive quality, they look best when clearly seen. "Research and fact are ever in collision with fancy and legend," observes Mr. Beveridge soberly; and it is to research and fact that he trusts to rescue his accomplished filibuster from those unproved charges which live by virtue of their vagueness. Writers of American school histories, remembering the duty of moral indignation, have played havoc with the reputation of Aaron Burr; and American schoolchildren, if they know him at all, know him as a duellist and a traitor. They are sure about the duel (it was one of the few facts firmly established in my own mind after a severe struggle with American history); but concerning the

treason, they are at least as ill-informed as their elders.

British children do better, perhaps, with John Wilkes. Little Londoners can gaze at the obelisk which commemorates his mayoralty, and think of him as a catless Whittington. The slogan "Wilkes and Liberty" has an attractive ring to all who are not of Madame Roland's way of thinking. No man ever gave his partisans more to defend, or his opponents better chances to attack; and friends and foes rose repeatedly and fervently to their opportunities. A century later, Sir George Trevelyan, a friend well worth the having, reviews the case with wise sincerity, undaunted confidence, a careful art in the arrangement of his high lights, and a niceness of touch which wins halfway all readers who love the English language. Wilkes was as naturally and inevitably in debt as was William Godwin, and Wilkes's debts were as natu-

rally and inevitably paid by some one else as were Godwin's; but when Trevelyan alludes softly to his "unambitious standard of solvency," this sordid detail becomes unexpectedly pleasurable. So easily are transgressions pardoned, if they provoke the shadow of a smile.

Lord Rosebery's "Napoleon: the Last Phase" is a work nobly conceived and admirably executed; but its impelling motive is an austere resolve to make what amends a single Englishman can make for an ungenerous episode in English history. Its sympathy for a fallen foe bears no likeness to the sympathy which impelled Théodore de Banville, broken in health and hope by the siege of Paris, to write a lyric in memory of a young Prussian officer, a mere boy, who was found dead on the field, with a blood-stained volume of Pindar in his tunic. Lord Rosebery's book is written with a proud sadness, a stern indigna-

tion, eminently fitted to its subject; but he is not so much kind as just. Napoleon is too vast a figure to be approached with benevolence. It is true, as Mr. Wells asserts, that, had he been unselfish and conscientious, he would never have conquered Europe; but only Mr. Wells is prepared to say that a lack of these qualities won him renown. He shares the lack with Wilhelm the Second, who has had neither an Austerlitz nor a Waterloo.

There is a wide assortment of unpopular characters whose company it would be very instructive to keep. They belong to all ages, countries and creeds. Spain alone offers us three splendid examples — the Duke of Alva, Cardinal Ximenez, and Philip the Second. Alva, like the Corsair, possessed one virtue, which was a more valuable virtue than the Corsair's, but brings him in less credit, because the object of his unswerving loyalty and devotion

was not a guileless lady, but a sovereign, less popular, if possible, than himself. Cardinal Ximenez, soldier, statesman, scholar, priest, ascetic, author and educator, was also Grand Inquisitor, and this fact alone seems to linger in the minds of men. That, for his day, he was a moderate, avails him little. That he made a point of protecting scholars and professors from the pernicious interference of the Inquisition ought to avail him a great deal. It might were it better known. There is a play of Sardou's in which he is represented as concentrating all the deadly powers of his office against the knowledge which he most esteemed. This is the way the drama educates.

And Philip? It would be a big piece of work to win for Philip even a partial recognition of his moderate merits. The hand of history has dealt heavily with him, and romance has preyed upon his vitals. In fact, history and romance are

undistinguishable when they give free play to the moral indignation he inspires. It is not enough to accuse him of the murder of the son whom he hated (though not more heartily than George the Second hated the Prince of Wales): they would have us understand that he probably poisoned the brother whom he loved. "Don John's ambitions had become troublesome, and he ceased to live at an opportune moment for Philip's peace of mind," is the fashion in which Gayarré insinuates his suspicions; and Gayarré's narrative — very popular in my youth — was recommended to the American public by Bancroft, who, I am convinced, never read it. Had he penetrated to the eleventh page, where Philip is alluded to as the Christian Tiberius, or to the twentieth, where he is compared to an Indian idol, he would have known that, whatever the book might be, it was not history, and that, as an historian, it ill

became him to tell innocent Americans to read it.

But how were they to be better informed? Motley will not even allow that Philip's fanatical devotion to his Church was a sincere devotion. He accuses him of hypocrisy, which is like accusing Cromwell of levity, or Burke of Jacobinism. Prescott has a fashion of turning the King's few amiabilities, as, for example, his tenderness for his third wife, Isabella of France, into a suggestion of reproach. "Well would it be for the memory of Philip, could the historian find no heavier sin to lay to his charge than his treatment of Isabella." Well would it be for all of us, could the recording angel lay no heavier charge to our account than our legitimate affections. The Prince of Orange, it is true, charged Philip with murdering both wife and son; but that was merely a political argument. He would as soon have charged him with the murder of

his father, had the Emperor not been safely isolated at Yuste; and Philip, in return, banned the Prince of Orange — a brave and wise ruler — as "an enemy of the human race."

Twenty-five years ago, an Englishman who was by nature distrustful of popular verdicts, and who had made careful studies of certain epochs of Spanish history, ventured to paint Philip in fresh colours. Mr. Martin Hume's monograph shows us a cultivated gentleman, with a correct taste in architecture and art, sober, abstemious, kind to petitioners, loyal and affectionate to his friends, generous to his soldiers and sailors; a man beloved by his own household, and reverenced by his subjects, to whom he brought nothing but misfortune. The book makes melancholy reading, because Philip's political sins were also political blunders; his mad intolerance was a distortion, rather than a rejection, of con-

science; and his inconceivable rigidity left him helpless to face the essential readjustments of life. "I could not do otherwise than I have done," he said with piercing sincerity, "though the world should fall in ruins around me."

Now what befell Mr. Hume who wrote history in this fashion, with no more liking for Philip than for Elizabeth or the Prince of Orange, but with a natural desire to get within the purlieus of truth? Certain empty honours were conferred upon him: a degree from Cambridge, membership in a few societies, the privilege of having some letters printed after his name. But the University of Glasgow and the University of Liverpool stoutly refused to give him the chairs of history and Spanish. He might know more than most men on these subjects; but they did not want their students exposed to new impressions. The good old way for them. Mr. Hume, being a reader, may have recalled

in bitterness of spirit the words of the acute and unemotional Sully, who had scant regard for Catholicism (though the Huguenots tried him sorely), and none at all for Spain; but who said, in his balanced, impersonal way, that Philip's finer qualities, his patience, piety, fortitude and single-mindedness, were all alike "lost on the vulgar."

Lucrezia Borgia is less available for our purpose, because the imaginary Lucrezia, though not precisely beloved, is more popular in her way than the real Lucrezia could ever hope to be. "In the matter of pleasantness," says Lucian, "truth is far surpassed by falsehood"; and never has it been more agreeably overshadowed than in this fragment of Italian history. We really could not bear to lose the Lucrezia of romance. She has done fatigue duty along every line of iniquity. She has specialized in all of the seven deadly sins. On Rossetti's canvas, in Donizetti's opera, in Vic-

tor Hugo's play, in countless poems and stories and novels, she has erred exhaustively for our entertainment. The image of an attractive young woman poisoning her supper guests is one which the world will not lightly let go.

And what is offered in return? Only the dull statements of people who chanced to know the lady, and who considered her a model wife and duchess, a little over-anxious about the education of her numerous children, but kind to the poor, generous to artists, and pitiful to Jews. "She is graceful, modest, lovable, decorous and devout," wrote Johannes Lucas from Rome to Ercole, the old Duke of Ferrara. "She is beautiful and good, gentle and amiable," echoed the Chevalier Bayard years later. Were we less avid for thrills, we might like to think of this young creature, snatched at twenty-one from the maelstrom of Rome, where she had

been a pawn in the game of politics, and placed in a secure and splendid home. The Lucrezia of romance would have found the court of Ferrara intolerably dull. The Lucrezia of history took to dullness as a duck to water. She was a sensible, rather than a brilliant woman, fully alive to the duties and dignities of her position, and well aware that respectability is a strong card to play in a vastly disreputable world.

There was a time when Robespierre and Marat made a high bid for unpopularity. Even those who clearly understood the rehabilitation of man in the French Revolution found little to say for its chosen instruments, whose purposes were high, but whose methods were open to reproach. Of late, however, a certain weariness has been observable in men's minds when these reformers are in question, a reluctance to expand with *any* emotion where they are concerned. M. Lauzanne is, indeed,

by way of thinking that the elemental Clemenceau closely resembles the elemental Robespierre; but this is not a serious valuation; it is letting picturesqueness run away with reason — a habit incidental to editorship.

The thoroughly modern point of view is that Robespierre and Marat were ineffective; not without ability in their respective lines, but unfitted for the parts they played. Marat's turn of mind was scientific (our own Benjamin Franklin found him full of promise). Robespierre's turn of mind was legal; he would have made an acute and successful lawyer. The Revolution came along and ruined both these lives, for which we are expected to be sorry. M. Lauzanne does not go so far as to say that the Great War ruined Clemenceau's life. The "Tiger" was seventy-three when the Germans marched into Belgium. Had he been content to spend all his years teaching in a girls' school,

he might (though I am none too sure of it) have been a gentler and a better man. But France was surely worth the price he paid. A lifeboat is not expected to have the graceful lines of a gondola.

"Almost everybody," says Stevenson, "can understand and sympathize with an admiral, or a prize-fighter"; which genial sentiment is less contagious now than when it was uttered, thirty years ago. A new type of admiral has presented itself to the troubled consciousness of men, a type unknown to Nelson, unsuspected by Farragut, unsung by Newbolt. In robbing the word of its ancient glory, Tirpitz has robbed us of an emotion we can ill-afford to lose. "The traditions of sailors," says Mr. Shane Leslie, "have been untouched by the lowering of ideals which has invaded every other class and profession." The truth of his words was brought home to readers by

the behaviour of the British merchant marine, peaceful, poorly paid men, who in the years of peril went out unflinchingly, and as a matter of course, to meet "their duty and their death." Many and varied are the transgressions of seafaring men; but we have hitherto been able to believe them sound in their nobler parts. We should like to cherish this simple faith, and, though alienated from prize-fighters by the narrowness of our civic and social code, to retain our sympathy for admirals. It cannot be that their fair fame will be forever smirched by the tactics of a man who ruined the government he served.

The function of criticism is to clear our mental horizon, to get us within close range of the criticized. It recognizes moral as well as intellectual issues; but it differentiates them. When Emerson said, "Goethe can never be dear to men. His is not even the devotion to pure truth, but to truth for the

sake of culture," he implied that truth, besides being a better thing than culture, was also a more lovable thing, which is not the case. It takes temerity to love Goethe; but there are always men — young, keen, speculative, beauty-loving men — to whom he is inexpressibly dear because of the vistas he opens, the thoughts he releases, the "inward freedom" which is all he claimed to give. It takes no less temerity to love Emerson, and he meant that it should be so, that we should climb high to reach him. He is not lovable as Lamb is lovable, and he would not have wanted to be. A man who all his life repelled unwelcome intimacies had no desire to surrender his memory to the affection of every idle reader.

It is such a sure thing to appeal from intelligence to the moral sense, from the trouble involved in understanding to the ease with which judgment is passed, that critics may be pardoned

their frequent misapprehensions. Problems of conduct are just as puzzling as problems of intellect. That is why Mr. Stevenson pronounced a sneaking kindness to be "instructive." He offered it as a road to knowledge rather than as a means of enjoyment. Not that he was unaware of the pleasures which follow in its wake. He knew the world up and down well enough to be thankful that he had never lost his taste for bad company.

The Divineness of Discontent

WHEN a distinguished Oxford student told Americans, through the distinguished medium of Harvard College, that they were "speeding with invincible optimism down the road to destruction," they paid him the formal compliment of listening to, and commenting upon, his words. They did not go so far as to be disturbed by them, because it is the nature of men to remain unmoved by prophecies. Only the Greek chorus — or its leader — paid any heed to Cassandra; and the folly of Edgar Poe in accepting without demur the reiterated statement of his raven is apparent to all readers of a much-read poem. The world has been speeding through the centuries to destruction, and the end is still remote. Nevertheless, as it is assuredly not speeding to perfection, the word

that chills our irrational content may do us some small service. It is never believed, and it is soon forgotten; but for a time it gives us food for thought.

Any one born as long ago as I was must remember that the virtue most deeply inculcated in our nurseries was content. It had no spiritual basis to lend it dignity and grace, but was of a Victorian smugness; though, indeed, it was not Victorian at all, but an inheritance from those late Georgian days which were the smuggest known to fame. It was a survival from Hannah More and Jane Taylor, ladies dissimilar in most respects, but with an equal gift for restricting the horizon of youth. I don't remember who wrote the popular story of the "Discontented Cat" that lived in a cottage on bread and milk and mice, and that made itself unhappy because a wealthy cat of its acquaintance was given buttered crumpets for breakfast; but either Jane

Taylor or her sister Ann was responsible for the "Discontented Pendulum," which grew tired of ticking in the dark, and, being reminded that it had a window to look through, retorted very sensibly that there was no use having a window, if it could not stop a second to look through it.

The nursery theory of content was built up on the presumption that you were the favoured child of fortune — or of God — while other, and no less worthy, children were objects of less kindly solicitude. Miss Taylor's "Little Ann" weeps because she sees richly clad ladies stepping into a coach while she has to walk; whereupon her mother points out to her a sick and ragged beggar child, whose

> "naked feet bleed on the stones,"

and with enviable hardness of heart bids her take comfort in the sight:

> "This poor little beggar is hungry and cold,
> No father nor mother has she;

And while you can daily such objects behold,
You ought quite contented to be."

Hannah More amplified this theory of content to fit all classes and circumstances. She really did feel concern for her fellow creatures, for the rural poor upon whom it was not the custom of Church or State to waste sympathy or help. She refused to believe that British labourers were "predestined to be ignorant and wicked" — which was to her credit; but she did, apparently, believe that they were predestined to be wretchedly poor, and that they should be content with their poverty. She lived on the fat of the land, and left thirty thousand pounds when she died; but she held that bare existence was sufficient for a ploughman. She wrote twenty-four books, which were twenty-four too many; but she told the ever-admiring Wilberforce that she permitted "no writing for the poor." She aspired to guide the policies and

the morals of England; but she was perturbed by the thought that underpaid artisans should seek to be "scholars and philosophers," though they must have stood in more need of philosophy than she did.

It was Ruskin who jolted his English readers, and some Americans, out of the selfish complacency which is degenerate content. It was he who harshly told England, then so prosperous and powerful, that prosperity and power are not virtues, that they do not indicate the sanction of the Almighty, or warrant their possessors in assuming the moral leadership of the world. It was he who assured the prim girlhood of my day that it was not the petted child of Providence, and that it had no business to be contented because it was better off than girlhood elsewhere. "Joy in nothing that separates you, as by any strange favour, from your fellow creatures, that exalts you through their

degradation, exempts you from their toil, or indulges you in times of their distress."

This was a new voice falling upon the attentive ears of youth — a fresh challenge to its native and impetuous generosity. Perhaps the beggar's bare feet were not a legitimate incentive to enjoyment of our own neat shoes and stockings. Perhaps it was a sick world we lived in, and the beggar was a symptom of disease. Perhaps when Emerson (we read Emerson and Carlyle as well as Ruskin) defined discontent as an infirmity of the will, he was thinking of personal and petty discontent, as with one's breakfast or the weather; not with the discontent which we never dared to call divine, but which we dimly perceived to have in it some noble attribute of grace. That the bare existence of a moral law should so exalt a spirit that neither sin nor sorrow could subdue its gladness was a pro-

fundity which the immature mind could not be expected to grasp.

Time and circumstance lent themselves with extraordinary graciousness to Emerson's invincible optimism. It was easier to be a transcendental philosopher, and much easier to cherish a noble and a sweet content, before the laying of the Atlantic cable. Emerson was over sixty when this event took place, and, while he lived, the wires were used with commendable economy. The morning newspaper did not bring him a detailed account of the latest Turkish massacre. The morning mail did not bring him photographs of starving Russian children. His temperamental composure met with little to derange it. He abhorred slavery; but until Lincoln forced the issue, he seldom bent his mind to its consideration. He loved "potential America"; but he had a happy faculty of disregarding public affairs. Passionate partisanship, which

is the basis of so much satisfaction and discontent, was alien to his soul. He loved mankind, but not men; and his avoidance of intimacies saved him much wear and tear. Mr. Brownell says that he did not care enough about his friends to discriminate between them, which was the reason he estimated Alcott so highly.

This immense power of withdrawal, this concentration upon the things of the spirit, made possible Emerson's intellectual life. He may have been, as Santayana says, "impervious to the evidence of evil"; yet there breaks from his heart an occasional sigh over the low ebb of the world's virtue, or an entirely human admission that the hopes of the morning are followed by the ennui of noon. Sustained by the supremacy of the moral law, and by a profound and majestic belief in the invincible justice, the "loaded dice" of God, he sums up in careful words his

modest faith in man: "Hours of sanity and consideration are always arriving to communities as to individuals, when the truth is seen, and the martyrs are justified." Perhaps martyrs foresee the dawning of this day or ever they come to die; but to those who stand by and witness their martyrdom, the night seems dark and long.

There is a species of discontent which is more fervently optimistic than all the cheerfulness the world can boast. It is the discontent of the passionate and unpractical reformer, who believes, as Shelley believed, in the perfectibility of the human species, and who thinks, as Shelley thought, that there is a remedy for every disease of civilization. To the poet's dreaming eyes the cure was simple and sure. Destruction implied for him an automatic reconstruction, a miraculous survival and rebirth. Uncrown the king, and some noble prophet or philosopher will guide — not rule —

the people. Unfrock the priest, and the erstwhile congregation will perfect itself in the practice of virtue. Take the arms from the soldier and the policeman, the cap and gown from the college president, authority from the judge, and control from the father. The nations will then be peaceful, the mobs orderly, the students studious, the criminals virtuous, the children well-behaved. An indifferent acquaintance with sociology, and a comprehensive ignorance of biology, made possible these pleasing illusions. Nor did it occur to Shelley that many men, his equals in disinterestedness and his superiors in self-restraint, would have found his reconstructed world an eminently undesirable dwelling-place.

Two counsels to content stand bravely out from the mass of contradictory admonitions with which the world's teachers have bewildered us. Saint Paul, writing to the Philippians, says

simply: "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content"; and Marcus Aurelius, contemplating the mighty spectacle of life and death, bids us pass serenely through our little space of time, and end our journey in content. It is the meeting-point of objective and subjective consciousness. The Apostle was having a hard time of it. The things he disciplined himself to accept with content were tangible things, of an admittedly disagreeable character — hunger and thirst, stripes and imprisonment. They were not happening to somebody else; they were happening to *him*. The Emperor, seeking refuge from action in thought, steeled himself against the nobleness of pity no less than against the weakness of complaint. John Stuart Mill, who did not suffer from enervating softness of heart, pronounced the wholesale killing of Christians in the reign of Marcus Aurelius to be one of the

world's great tragedies. It was the outcome, not only of imperial policy, but of sincere conviction. Therefore historians have agreed to pass it lightly by. How can a man do better than follow the dictates of his own conscience, or of his own judgment, or of whatever directs the mighty ones of earth who make laws instead of obeying them? But the immensity of pain, the long-drawn agony involved in this protracted persecution might have disturbed even a Stoic philosopher passing serenely — though not harmlessly — through his little space of time.

This brings me to the consideration of one prolific source of discontent, the habit we have acquired — and cannot let go — of distressing ourselves over the daily progress of events. The classic world, "innocent of any essential defeat," was a pitiless world, too clear-eyed for illusions, too intelligent for sedatives. The Greeks built the

structure of their lives upon an almost perfect understanding of all that it offered and denied. The Romans, running an empire and ruling a world, had much less time for thinking; yet Horace, observant and acquiescent, undeceived and undisturbed, is the friend of all the ages. It is not from him, or from any classic author, that we learn to talk about the fret and fever of living. He would have held such a phrase to be eminently ill-bred, and unworthy of man's estate.

The Middle Ages, immersed in heaving seas of trouble, and lifted Heavenward by great spiritual emotions, had scant breathing-space for the cultivation of nerves. Men endured life and enjoyed it. Their endurance and their enjoyment were unimpaired by the violence of their fellow men, or by the vision of an angry God. Cruelty, which we cannot bear to read about, and a Hell, which we will not bear to think

about, failed signally to curb the zest with which they lived their days. "How high the tide of human delight rose in the Middle Ages," says Mr. Chesterton significantly, "we know only by the colossal walls they built to keep it within bounds." There is no reason to suppose that Dante, whose fervid faith compassed the redemption of mankind, disliked his dream of Hell, or that it irked him to consign to it so many eminent and agreeable people.

The Renaissance gave itself unreservedly to all the pleasures that could be extracted from the business of living, though there was no lack of troubles to damp its zeal. It is interesting and instructive to read the history of a great Italian lady, typical of her day, Isabella d'Este, Marchioness of Mantua. She was learned, adroit, able, estimable, and mistress of herself though duchies fell. She danced serenely at the ball given by the French King at Milan,

after he had ousted her brother-in-law, the Duke Ludovico, and sent him to die a prisoner at Loches. When Cæsar Borgia snatched Urbino, she improved the occasion by promptly begging from him two beautiful statues which she had always coveted, and which had been the most treasured possessions of Duke Guidobaldo, her relative, and the husband of her dearest friend. A chilly heart had Isabella when others came to grief, but a stout one when disaster faced her way. If the men and women who lived through those highly coloured, harshly governed days had fretted too persistently over the misfortunes of others, or had spent their time questioning the moral intelligibility of life, the Renaissance would have failed of its fruition, and the world would be a less engaging place for us to live in now.

There is a discontent which is profoundly stimulating, and there is a

discontent which is more wearisome than complacency. Both spring from a consciousness that the time is out of joint, and both have a modern background of nerves. "The Education of Henry Adams" and the "Diaries" of Wilfrid Scawen Blunt are cases in point. Blunt's quarrel was with his country, his world, his fellow creatures and his God — a broad field of dissatisfaction, which was yet too narrow to embrace himself. Nowhere does he give any token of even a moderate self-distrust. Britain is an "engine of evil," because his party is out of power. "Americans" (in 1900) "are spending fifty millions a year in slaughtering the Filipinos" — a crude estimate of work and cost. "The Press is the most complete engine ever invented for the concealment of historic truth." "Patriotism is the virtue of nations in decay." "The whole white race is revelling openly in violence, as though it

had never pretended to be Christian. God's equal curse be on them all."

"The whole white race," be it observed. For a time Blunt dreamed fond dreams of yellow and brown and black supremacy. Europe's civilization he esteemed a failure. Christianity had not come up to his expectations. There remained the civilization of the East, and Mohammedanism — an amended Mohammedanism, innocent of sensuality and averse to bloodshed. Filled with this happy hope, the Englishman set off from Cairo to seek religion in the desert.

Siwah gave him a rude reception. Ragged tribes, ardent but unregenerate followers of the Prophet, pulled down his tents, pillaged his luggage, robbed his servants, and knocked him rudely about. Blunt's rage at this treatment was like the rage of "Punch's" vegetarian who is chased by a bull. "There is no hope to be found in Islam, and I

shall go no further," is his conclusion. "The less religion in the world, perhaps the better."

Humanity and its creeds being thus disposed of, there remained only the animals to contemplate with satisfaction. "Three quarters of man's misery," says the diary, "comes from pretending to be what he is not, a separate creation, superior to that of the beasts and birds, when in reality they are wiser than we are, and infinitely happier."

This is the kind of thing Walt Whitman used now and then to say, though neither he nor Sir Wilfrid knew any more about the happiness of beasts and birds than do the rest of us. But that brave old hopeful, Whitman, would have laughed his loudest over Blunt's final analysis of the situation: "All the world would be a paradise in twenty years if man could be shut out." A paradise already imaged by Lord Holland and the poet Gray:

"Owls would have hooted in Saint Peter's choir,
And foxes stunk and littered in Saint Paul's."

To turn from these pages of pettish and puerile complaint to the deep-seated discontent of Henry Adams is to reënter the world of the intellect. Mark Pattison confessed that he could not take a train without thinking how much better the time-table might have been planned. It was an unhappy twist of mind; but the Rector of Lincoln utilized his obtrusive critical faculties by applying them to his own labours, and scourging himself to greater effort. So did Henry Adams, though even the greater effort left him profoundly dissatisfied. He was unelated by success, and he could not reconcile himself to that degree of failure which is the common portion of mankind. His criticisms are lucid, balanced, enlightening, and occasionally prophetic, as when he comments on the Irishman's political passion for obstructing even himself,

and on the perilous race-inertia of Russia. "Could inertia on such a scale be broken up, or take new scale?" he asks dismayed; and we read the answer today. A minority ruling with iron hand; a majority accepting what comes to them, as they accept day and night and the seasons.

If there is not an understatement in the five hundred pages of the "Education," which thereby loses the power of persuasion, there is everywhere an appeal to man's austere equity and disciplined reason. Adams was not in love with reason. He said that the mind resorted to it for want of training, and he admitted that he had never met a perfectly trained mind. But it was the very essence of reason which made him see that friends were good to him, and the world not unkind; that the loveliness of the country about Washington gave him pleasure, even when he found "a personal grief in every tree"; and

that a self-respecting man refrains from finding wordy fault with the conditions under which he lives. He did not believe, with Wordsworth, that nature is a holy and beneficent thing, or with Blake, that nature is a wicked and malevolent thing; but he knew better than to put up a quarrel with an invincible antagonist. He erred in supposing that other thoughtful men were as discontented as he was, or that disgust with the methods of Congress corroded their hours of leisure; but he expressed clearly and with moderation his unwillingness to cherish "complete and archaic deceits," or to live in a world of illusions. His summing up is the summing up of another austere and uncompromising thinker, Santayana, when confronted by the same problem: "A spirit with any honour is not willing to live except in its own way; a spirit with any wisdom is not over-eager to live at all."

As our eagerness and our reluctance are not controlling factors in the situation, it is unwise to stress them too heavily. Yet we must think, at least some of us must; and it is well to think out as clearly as we can, not the relative advantages of content and discontent — a question which briskly answers itself — but the relative rightness. Emerson believed in the essential goodness of life, in the admirable law of compensation. Santayana believes that life has evil for its condition, and is for that reason profoundly sad and equivocal. He sees in the sensuous enjoyment of the Greek, the industrial optimism of the American, only a "thin disguise for despair." Yet Emerson and Santayana reach the same general conclusion. The first says that hours of sanity and consideration come to communities as to individuals, "when the truth is seen, and the martyrs are justified"; the second that "people in

all ages sometimes achieve what they have set their hearts on," and that, if our will and conduct were better disciplined, "contentment would be more frequent and more massive."

It is hard to think of these years of grace as a chosen period of sanity and consideration; and the hearts of the Turk and the Muscovite are set on things which do not make for the massive contentment of the world. The orderly processes of civilization have been so wrenched and shattered that readjustment is blocked at some point in every land, in our own no less than in others. There are those who say that the World War went beyond the bounds of human endurance; and that the peculiar horror engendered by indecent methods of attack — poison-gases, high explosives and corrosive fluids — has dimmed the faith and broken the spirit of men. But Attila managed to turn a fair proportion of

the civilized world into wasteland, with only man-power as a destructive force. Europe to-day is by comparison unscathed, and there are kinsfolk dwelling upon peaceful continents to whom she may legitimately call for aid.

Legitimately, unless our content is like the content extolled by Little Ann's mother; unless our shoes and stockings are indicative of God's meaningless partiality, and unless the contemplation of our neighbour's bleeding feet enhances our pious satisfaction. "I doubt," says Mr. Wells sourly, "if it would make any very serious difference for some time in the ordinary daily life of Kansas City, if all Europe were reduced to a desert in the next five years." Why Kansas City should have been chosen as the symbol of unconcern, I do not know; but space has a deadening influence on pity as on fear. The farther we travel from the Atlantic coast, the more tepid is the sympathy

for injured France. The farther we travel from the Pacific coast, the fainter is the prejudice against Japan.

It may be possible to construct a state in which men will be content with their own lot, if they be reasonable, and with their neighbours' lot, if they be generous. It is manifestly impossible to construct a world on this principle. Therefore there will always be a latent grief in the nobler part of man's soul. Therefore there will always be a content as impious as the discontent from which Pope prayed to be absolved.

The unbroken cheerfulness, no less than the personal neatness, of the British prisoners in the World War astounded the more temperamental Germans. Long, long ago it was said of England: "Even our condemned persons doe goe cheerfullie to their deths, for our nature is free, stout, hautie, prodigal of life and blood." This heroic strain, tempered to an endurance

which is free from the waste of emotionalism, produces the outward semblance and the inward self-respect of a content which circumstances render impossible. It keeps the soul of man immune from whatever degradation his body may be suffering. It saves the land that bred him from the stigma of defeat. It is remotely and humanly akin to the tranquillity of the great Apostle in a Roman prison. It is wholly alien to the sin of smugness which has crept in among the domestic virtues, and rendered them more distasteful than ever to austere thinkers, and to those lonely, generous souls who starve in the midst of plenty.

There is a curious and suggestive paragraph in Mr. Chesterton's volume of loose ends, entitled "What I Saw in America." It arrests our attention because, for once, the writer seems to be groping for a thought instead of juggling with one. He recognizes a keen

and charming quality in American women, and is disturbed because he also recognizes a recoil from it in his own spirit. This is manifestly perplexing. "To complain of people for being brave and bright and kind and intelligent may not unreasonably appear unreasonable. And yet there is something in the background that can be expressed only by a symbol; something that is not shallowness, but a neglect of the subconscious, and the vaguer and slower impulses; something that can be missed amid all that laughter and light, under those starry candelabra of the ideals of the happy virtues. Sometimes it came over me in a wordless wave that I should like to see a sulky woman. How she would walk in beauty like the night, and reveal more silent spaces full of older stars! These things cannot be conveyed in their delicate proportion, even in the most large and elusive terms."

Baudelaire has conveyed them measurably in four words:

"Sois belle! Sois triste!"

Yet neither "sulky" nor "triste" is an adjective suggesting with perfect felicity the undercurrent of discontent which lends worth to courage and charm to intelligence. Back of all our lives is the sombre setting of a world ill at ease, and beset by perils. Darkening all our days is the gathering cloud of ill-will, the ugly hatred of man for man, which is the perpetual threat to progress. We Americans may not be so invincibly optimistic as our critics think us, and we may not yet be "speeding" down the road to destruction, as our critics painfully foretell; but we are part of an endangered civilization, and cannot hold up our end, unsupported by Europe. An American woman, cautiously investing her money in government bonds, said to her man of bus-

iness: "These at least are perfectly secure?" "I should not say that," was the guarded reply; "but they will be the last things to go."

A few years ago there was a period that saw the workingmen and workingwomen of the United States engaged in three hundred and sixty-five strikes — one for every day of the year — and all of them on at once. Something seems lacking in the equity of our industrial life. The "Current History" of the New York "Times" is responsible for the statement that eighty-five thousand men and women met their deaths by violence in the United States during the past decade. Something seems lacking in our programme of peace.

Can it be that Mr. Wells is right when he says that the American believes in peace, but feels under no passionate urgency to organize it? Does our notable indifference to the history of the

past mean that we are unconcerned about the history of the present? Two things are sure. We cannot be nobly content with our own prosperity, unless its service to the world is made manifest; grace before meat is not enough to bless the food we eat. And we cannot be nobly content with our unbroken strength, with the sublimity of size and numbers, unless there is something correspondingly sublime in our leadership of the wounded nations. Our allies, who saved us and whom we saved, face the immediate menace of poverty and assault. They face it with a slowly gathered courage which we honour to-day, and may be compelled to emulate to-morrow. "The fact that fear is rational," says Mr. Brownell, "is what makes fortitude divine."

Allies

FRIENDSHIP between princes," observed the wise Philippe de Commines, "is not of long duration." He would have said as much of friendship between republics, had he ever conceived of representative government. What he knew was that the friendships of men, built on affection and esteem, outlast time; and that the friendships of nations, built on common interests, cannot survive the mutability of those interests, which are always liable to deflection. He had proof, if proof were needed, in the invasion of France by Edward the Fourth under the pressure of an alliance with Charles of Burgundy. It was one of the urbane invasions common to that gentlemanly age. "Before the King of England embarked from Dover, he sent one of his heralds named Garter, a native of

Normandy, to the King of France, with a letter of defiance couched in language so elegant and so polite that I can scarcely believe any Englishman wrote it."

This was a happy beginning, and the end was no less felicitous. When Edward landed in France he found that Louis the Eleventh, who hated fighting, was all for peace; and that the Duke of Burgundy, who generally fought the wrong people at the wrong time, was in no condition for war. Therefore he patched up a profitable truce, and went back to England, a wiser and a richer man, on better terms with his enemy than with his ally. "For where our advantage lies, there also is our heart."

The peculiar irritation engendered by what Americans discreetly designate as "entangling alliances" was forced upon my perception in early youth, when I read the letters of a British officer engaged in fighting the Ashanti.

The war, if it may be so termed, was fought in 1873, and the letters were published in "Blackwood's Magazine." The Ashanti had invaded Fantiland, then under a British protectorate, and the troops commanded by Sir Garnet Wolseley were presumably defending their friends. This particular officer expressed his sense of the situation in a fervid hope that when the Ashanti were beaten, as they deserved to be, the English would then come to speedy terms with them, "and drive these brutes of Fanti off the map."

It is a sentiment which repeats itself in more measured terms on every page of history. The series of "Coalitions" formed against Napoleon were rich in super-comic, no less than in super-tragic elements; and it was well for those statesmen whose reason and whose tempers were so controlled that they were able to perceive the humours of this giant game of pussy-in-the-corner.

A mutual fear of France drew the Allies together; a mutual distrust of one another pulled them apart. Sir Gilbert Elliot, afterwards Lord Minto, endeavoured from the beginning to make England understand that Austria would prefer her own interests to the interests of the Coalition, and that it was not unnatural that she should do so. The situation, as he saw it, was something like this:

"Austria: 'If I am to dance to your tune, you must pay the piper.'

"England: 'So long as I lead the figure, and you renounce a *pas seul*.'"

Unfortunately the allurements of a *pas seul* were too strong to be anywhere resisted. Prices grew stiffer and stiffer, armies melted away when the time for action neared. Britain, always victorious at sea, paid out large sums for small returns on land. Her position was briefly summed up by Sir Hugh Elliot — more brilliant and less astute than

his brother — at the hostile Court of Prussia. Frederick the Great, overhearing the pious ejaculation with which the Englishman greeted the arrival of a satisfactory dispatch from Sir Eyre Coote, said to him acidly: "I was not aware that God was also one of your allies." "The only one, Sire, whom we do not finance," was the lightning retort.

One more circumstance deserves to be noted as both familiar and consolatory. Napoleon's most formidable purpose was to empty England's purse by waging a commercial war. When he forbade her exports to the countries he fancied he controlled, he was promised implicit obedience. In March, 1801, Lord Minto wrote serenely to Lord Grenville: "The trade of England and the necessities of the Continent will find each other out in defiance of prohibitions. Not one of the confederates will be true to the gang, and I have

little doubt of our trade penetrating into France itself, and thriving in Paris." — Which it did.

The comfortable thing about the study of history is that it inclines us to think hopefully of our own times. The despairing tone of contemporary writers would seem to indicate that the allied nations that fought and won the Great War have fallen from some high pinnacle they never reached to an abysmal depth they have never sounded. When Dean Inge recorded in "The Contemporary Review" his personal conviction that the war had been "a ghastly and unnecessary blunder, which need not have happened, and ought not to have happened," this casual statement was taken up and repeated on both sides of the Atlantic, after the exasperating fashion in which a Greek chorus takes up and repeats in strophe and antistrophe the most depressing sentiment of the play. And to

what purpose? Did any sane man ever doubt that Austria's brutal ultimatum to Serbia was a ghastly and unnecessary blunder? Did any sane man ever doubt that Germany's invasion of Belgium was a ghastly and unnecessary blunder? But if Dean Inge or his sympathizers knew of any argument, save that of arms, by which the Central Powers could have been convinced that they were blundering, and persuaded to retrieve their blunder, so that what ought not to have happened need not have happened, it is a pity that this enlightenment was not vouchsafed to an imperilled world.

It is possible for two boys to build up a friendship on the basis of a clean fight. It is possible for two nations to build up a good understanding on the basis of a clean fight. The relations between Great Britain and South Africa constitute a case in point. Germany's fighting was unclean from start to finish.

Therefore, while there are many to feel commiseration for her, there are none to do her honour. The duration of the war has little to do with this strong sentiment of disesteem. Had it lasted four months instead of four years, the deeds done in Belgium and in France would have sterilized the seeds of friendship in the minds of all who remembered them. To an abnormal sense of superiority, Germany added an abnormal lack of humour, which made her regard all resistance as an unjustifiable and unpardonable affront. Her resentment that Belgians should have presumed to defend their country was like the resentment of that famous marauder, the Earl of Cassillis, when Allan Stewart refused to be tortured into signing away his patrimony. "You are the most obstinate man I ever saw to oblige me to use you thus," said the justly indignant Earl. "I never thought to have treated any one as

your stubbornness has made me treat you."

The emotional ebb-tide which followed the signing of the armistice was too natural to be deplored, save that it gave to obstructionists their chance to decry the matchless heroisms of the war. No people can be heroic over the problem of paying debts out of an empty treasury. Need drives men to envy as fullness drives them to selfishness. Bargaining is essential to the life of the world; but nobody has ever claimed that it is an ennobling process. If it were given to debtors to love their creditors, there would have been no persecution of the Jews. If it were given to creditors to love their debtors, there would be no poverty on earth. That all the nations, now presumably on friendly terms, should be following their own interests would seem to most of us the normal thing it is, if they did not so persistently affect to be amazed

and grieved at one another's behaviour, and if the mischief-makers of every land were not actively engaged in widening breaches into chasms.

It is inevitable and logical that the men who were pacifists when the word had a sinister meaning should heartily detest their countries' allies who helped them win the war. The English "Nation and Athenæum" wrote of France in 1922 as it might have written — but did not — of Germany in 1914. Poincaré it likened to Shylock, France to a butcher eager for the shambles. "French militarism at work in the Rhineland is a lash to every evil passion." "Europe is kept in social and political disorder by the sheer selfishness of France." "There *was* a France of the mind. Victory killed it, and a long slow renovation of the soul must precede its resurrection."

Like the ingenuous Mr. Pepys, the "Nation" does "just naturally hate

the French," and takes it hard that the world should persistently regard them as a valuable asset to civilization. The concentrated nationalism which held Verdun now expresses itself in a steely resolution to hold France, and to recover for her out of the wreckage of Europe the material aid of which she stands in need. Coöperation is a good word and a good thing. To a Frenchman it means primarily the interest of his own country. What else does it mean to any of us? Britain's policy of conciliation, our policy of aloofness, Germany's bargaining, and Russia's giant bluff, all have the same significance. "Be not deceived! Nothing is so dear to any creature as his profit," said Epictetus, who, having stript his own soul bare of desires, was correspondingly ready to forgive the acquisitive instincts of others.

Mr. Edward Martin, writing very lucidly and very sympathetically of the

French, admits that their conception of their duty to the world "is to defend France, keep her functioning, and make her powerful and prosperous." It sounds narrow, and practical, and arrogant. It also sounds familiar. France feels herself to be intellectually and artistically a thing of value. The best service she can render to the world is her own preservation. How does America feel? The very week that Mr. Martin offered his interpretation of Gallic nationalism, a writer in the "Review of Reviews" (New York), after asserting with indescribable smugness that Americans "have been trained to an attitude of philanthropy hardly known in other countries," proceeded to illustrate this attitude by defending high tariffs, restricted immigration, and other comforting pieces of legislation. "Our best service to the world," he explained, "lies in maintaining our national life and character."

This is just what France thinks, only her most zealous sons forbear to define prudence as philanthropy. They believe that the world is the better for what they have to give; but they know that it is not for the world's sake that they so keenly desire to be in a position to give it. They are profoundly sentimental, but their sentiment is all for *la patrie*. Internationally they are practical to the point of hardness, and they see no reason why they should be otherwise. There is for them no pressing necessity to assume that they love their neighbours as themselves.

It is different with Americans in whom idealism and materialism dispute every inch of the ground. A Texan professor, sent by the American Peace Commission to investigate conditions in Germany, published in "The North American Review," May, 1922, a paper on "American Ideals and Traditions," which was widely quoted as embodying

a clear and fervid spirit of hopefulness, much needed in these disillusioned days. The writer took the high ground that Americans were the first people in the world "to make the spirit of disinterested human service the measure of a nation as well as of a man. What is now termed American humanitarianism is but the American spirit of philanthropy at home, translated into international relations." This "simple historical fact" is the key to all our actions. "The entrance of America into the Great War was not a species of interruption in the normal flow of its idealism; but was the irresistible onpressing of the great current of our 'will to human service.'"

One wonders if this particular idealist remembers what happened in Europe, in the United States, and on the high seas, between July, 1914, and April, 1917? Does he recall those thirty-two months, close-packed with incidents of

such an order that their cumulative weight broke down our hardy resistance to "service," and drove us slowly but splendidly into action? Great deeds are based on great emotions; but the conflicting emotions of that period are not accurately described as "irresistible." The best of them were too long and too successfully resisted. We gain no clear impression of events by thinking in ornamental terms. Headlines are one thing, and history is another. "In judging others," says Thomas à Kempis, "a man usually toileth in vain. For the most part he is mistaken, and he easily sinneth. But in judging and scrutinizing himself, he always laboureth with profit."

The continued use of the word "entangling" is to be regretted. It arouses an excess of uneasiness in cautious souls. All alliances from marriage up — or down — must necessarily entangle. The anchorites of Thebais are the

only examples we have of complete emancipation from human bonds. That simple and beautiful thing, minding our own affairs and leaving our neighbours to mind theirs, is unhappily not possible for allies. Neither is a keen and common desire for peace a sufficient basis for agreement. Peace must have terms, and terms require a basis of their own — justice, reason, and the limited gains which are based on mutual concessions. "Whether we are peaceful depends upon whether others are provocative." Mr. W. H. Mallock tells us a pleasant story of an old Devonshire woman who was bidden by the parson to be "conciliating" to her husband. "I labour for peace, sir," was the spirited reply. "But when I speak to he thereof, he directly makes hisself ready for battle."

There are students of history who would have us believe that certain nations are natural allies, fitted by char-

acter and temperament to agree, and to add to one another's pleasure and profit. Germany and Russia have been cited more than once as countries instinctively well disposed towards each other, because each supplements the other's talents. Bismarck ranked the Germans as among the male, and the Slavs as among the female nations of the world. The driving power he rightfully assigned to Germany. "The soft Slav nature," says a writer in "The New Republic," "emotional, sensitive, but undisciplined, has derived most of such progress as it has made in material civilization from German sources."

Both countries have proved unsound allies, and Russia has the feminine quality of changeableness. "Dangerous to her foes, disastrous to her friends." Both make the same kind of currency, and stand in need of business partners who make a different sort. America, with the gold of Europe

locked up in her treasury, is the most desirable, but least accessible, partner in Christendom. As the great creditor of the civilized world, she has been impelled to assert that no participation on her part in any international conference implies a surrender of her claims to payment. France, as the great sufferer by a world's war, has made it equally clear that no participation on *her* part implies a surrender of her claims to reparation. The anger and shame with which the Allies first saw the injuries inflicted on her have been softened by time; and that strange twist in human nature which makes men more concerned for the welfare of a criminal than for the welfare of his victim has disposed us to think kindly of an unrepentant Germany. But France cannot well forget the wounds from which she bleeds. Less proud than Britain, which prefers beggary to debt, she is infinitely more logical;

and it is the unassailable strength of her position which has irritated the sentimentalists of the world, whose hearts are in the right place, but whose heads are commonly elsewhere.

The French press has waxed sorrowful and bitter over France's sense of isolation. Her cherished belief in the "unshakable American friendship" has been cruelly shattered, and she has asked of Heaven and earth where is the (proverbially absent) gratitude of republics. That there is no such thing as an unshakable national friendship is as well known to the clear-headed and well-informed French as to the rest of us. They were our very good friends in 1777, and our love for them flamed high. They were our very bad friends in 1797, and by the time they had taken or sunk three hundred and forty American ships, our affection had grown cool. It revived in 1914 under the impetus of their great wrongs and greater valour.

Some good feeling remains, and bids fair to remain, if the press and the politicians of both lands will kindly let it alone; but popular enthusiasm, a fire of straw, burned itself quickly out. After all, we ourselves are no longer the idol of our whilom friends. A fairy godmother is popular only when she is changing pumpkins into coaches, and mice into prancing bays. When she gives nothing but good advice, her words are no more golden than her neighbour's. In the realm of the practical, a friendship which does not help, and an enmity which does not hurt, can never be controlling factors.

Great Britain sets scant store by any ally save the sea. She has journeyed far, changing friends on the road as a traveller by post changed horses. She has fought her way, and is singularly devoid of rancour towards her enemies. The time has indeed gone by when, after battle, the English and French

knights — or what was left of them — would thank each other for a good fight. Those were days of lamentable darkness, when the last thing a gentleman craved was the privilege of dying in his bed by some slow and agonizing process, the gift of nature, and gratefully designated as "natural." The headsman for the noble, the hangman for the churl, and the fortunes of war for everybody, made death so easy to come by, and so inexpensive, that there was a great deal of money left for the pleasures of living. That stout-hearted Earl of Northumberland who thanked God that for two hundred years no head of his house had died in bed, knew what his progenitors had been spared. Even in the soberly civilized eighteenth century there lingered a doubt as to the relative value of battlefield, gallows and sick-chamber.

"Men may escape from rope and gun,
Some have outlived the doctor's pill;"

sang Captain Macheath to the fashionable world which thronged to hear the verities of "The Beggar's Opera."

Fighting and making up, alternate friends and foes, the nations of Europe have come in a thousand years to know one another fairly well. There was a short time when Napoleon's threatened invasion awakened in England's breast a hearty and healthy abhorrence of France. There was a long time when the phrase, "virgin of English," applied to a few perilously placed French seaports (Saint-Malo, for example), revealed, as only such proud and burning words can ever reveal, the national hatred of England. Over and over again history taught the same lesson; that the will of a people is stout to repel the invader, and that a foreign alliance offers no stable foundation for policy. But a great deal is learned from contact, whether it be friendly or inimical; and the close call of the Great War

has left behind it a legacy of percipience. It was an Englishman who discovered during those years that the French officers snored "with a certain politeness." It was a great American who said that France had "saved the soul of the world." It was a Frenchman who wrote comprehensively: "To disregard danger, to stand under fire, is not for an Englishman an act of courage; it is part of a good education." When gratitude is forgotten, as all things which clamour for remembrance should be, and sentimentalism has dissolved under the pitiless rays of reality, there remains, and will remain, a good understanding which is the basis of good will.

At present the nations that were drawn together by a common peril are a little tired of one another's company, and more than a little irritated by one another's grievances. The natural result of this weariness and irritation is an increase of sympathy for Germany,

who now finds herself detested by her former allies, and smiled upon by at least some of her former foes. All that she says, and she has a great deal to say, is listened to urbanely. General Ludendorff has assured the American public that Prussia was innocent of even a desire to injure England. What she sought was peace "on conditions acceptable and inoffensive to both parties." The Crown Prince's memoirs, which have been appreciatively reviewed, set forth in eloquent language the Arthurian blamelessness of the Hohenzollerns. "The results of the excessive Viennese demand upon Serbia involved us in the war against our will."

The breathless competition for the memoirs of the exiled Kaiser was a notable event in the publishing world. The history of literature can show nothing to resemble it. In 1918 we gravely discussed the propriety of trying this gentleman for his life. In 1922 we con-

tended with far more heat for the privilege of presenting to a gratified public his imperial views upon his imperial policy. Americans exulted over the acquisition of these copyrights as they exulted over the acquisition of the Blue Boy. It is a grand thing to be able to outbid one's neighbour, and pay a "record-smashing" price for any article in the market. Certain inflexible and unhumorous souls took umbrage at this catering to a principle we professed to reject, at the elevation of Wilhelm the Second to the rank of the world's most favoured author. They thought it implied a denial of all we reverenced, of all we fought for, of all we knew to be good. It really implied nothing but curiosity; and curiosity is not to be confounded with homage. Saint Michael is honoured of men and angels; but if he and Lucifer gave their memoirs to the world, which would be better paid for, or more read?

They Had Their Day

"TO a man," says an engaging cynic in Mr. Stephen McKenna's "Sonia," "sex is an incident: to a woman it is everything in this world and in the next"; a generalization which a novelist can always illustrate with a heroine who meets his views. We have had many such women in recent fiction, and it takes some discernment to perceive that in them sex seems everything, only because honour and integrity and fair-mindedness are nothing. They are not swept by emotions good or bad; but when all concern for other people's rights and privileges is eliminated, a great deal of room is left for the uneasy development of appetites which may be called by any name we like.

Among the Georgian and early-Victorian novelists, Richardson alone

stands as an earnest and pitiless expositor of sex. He slipped as far away from it as he could in "Sir Charles Grandison," but in doing so he slipped away from reality. The grossness of Fielding's men is not intrinsic; it is, as Mr. McKenna would say, incidental. Jane Austen, who never wrote of things with which she was unfamiliar, gave the passions a wide berth. Scott was too robustly masculine, and Dickens too hopelessly and helplessly humorous, to deal with them intelligently. Thackeray dipped deep into the strong tide of life, and was concerned with all its eddying currents. Woman was to him what she was not to Scott, "une grande réalité comme la guerre"; and, like war, she had her complications. He found these complications to be for the most part distasteful; but he never assumed that a single key could open all the chambers of her soul.

When Mrs. Ritchie said of Jane

Austen's heroines that they have "a certain gentle self-respect, and humour, and hardness of heart," she must have had Emma in her mind. Humour hardens the heart, at least to the point of sanity; and Emma surveys her little world of Highbury very much as Miss Austen surveyed her little world of Steventon and Chawton, with a less piercing intelligence, but with the same appreciation of foibles, and the same unqualified acceptance of tedium. To a modern reader, the most striking thing about the life depicted in all these novels is its dullness. The men have occupations of some sort, the women have none. They live in the country, or in country towns. Of outdoor sports they know nothing. They walk when the lanes are not too muddy, and some of them ride. They play round games in the evening, and always for a stake. A dinner or a dance is an event in their lives; and as for acting, we know what

magnificent proportions *it* assumes when we are told that even to Henry Crawford, "in all the riot of his gratifications, it was as yet an untasted pleasure."

Emma, during the thirteen months in which we enjoy her acquaintance, finds plenty of mischief for her idle hands to do. Her unwarranted interference in the love affairs of two people whom it is her plain business to let alone is the fruit of ennui. Young, rich, nimble of wit and sound of heart, she lives through days and nights of inconceivable stupidity. She does not ride, and we have Mr. Knightley's word for it that she does not read. She can sketch, but one drawing in thirteen months is the sum of her accomplishment. She may possibly have a regard for the "moral scenery" which Hannah More condescended to admire; but nature is neither law nor impulse to her soul. She knows little or nothing of the

country about her own home. It takes the enterprising Mrs. Elton to get her as far as Box Hill, a drive of seven miles, though the view it commands is so fine as to provoke "a burst of admiration" from beholders who have apparently never taken the trouble to look at it before. "We are a very quiet set of people," observes Emma in complacent defence of this apathy, "more disposed to stay at home than engage in schemes of pleasure."

Dr. Johnson's definition of a novel as "a smooth tale, generally of love," fits Miss Austen well. It is not that she assigns to love a heavy rôle; but there is nothing to interfere with its command of the situation. Vague yearnings, tempestuous doubts, combative principles, play no part in her well-ordered world. The poor and the oppressed are discreetly excluded from its precincts. Emma does not teach the orphan boy to read, or the orphan girl to sew. She

looks after her father's comfort, and plays backgammon with him in the evenings. Of politics she knows nothing, and the most complicated social problem she is called on to face is the recognition, or the rejection, of her less fashionable neighbours. Are, or are not, the Coles sufficiently genteel to warrant her dining with them? Highbury is her universe, and no restless discontent haunts her with waking dreams of the Tiber and the Nile. Frank Churchill may go to London, sixteen miles off, to get his hair cut; but Emma remains at Hartfield, and holds the centre of the stage. We can count the days, we can almost count the hours in her monotonous life. She is unemotional, even for her setting; and it was after reading her placid history that Charlotte Brontë wrote the memorable depreciation of all Miss Austen's novels.

But, though beset and environed by

dullness, Emma is not dull. On the contrary, she is remarkably engaging; less vivacious than Elizabeth Bennet, but infinitely more agreeable. She puts us into a good humour with ourselves, she "produces delight." The secret of her potency is that she has grasped the essential things of life, and let the non-essentials go. There is distinction in the way she accepts near duties, in her sense of balance, and order, and propriety. She is a normal creature, highly civilized, and sanely artificial. Mr. Saintsbury says that Miss Austen knew two things: humanity and art. "Her men, though limited, are true, and her women are, in the old sense, absolute." Emma is "absolute." The possibility — or impossibility — of being Mr. Knightley's intellectual competitor never occurs to her. She covets no empty honours. She is content to be necessary and unassailable.

Mr. Chesterton has written a whim-

sical and fault-finding paper entitled "The Evolution of Emma," in which he assumes that this embodiment of domesticity is the prototype of the modern welfare worker who runs birth-control meetings and baby weeks, urges maternity bills upon legislators, prates about segregation, and preaches eugenics and sex hygiene to a world that knows a great deal more about such matters than she does. Emma, says Mr. Chesterton, considers that because she is more genteel than Harriet Smith she is privileged to alienate this humble friend from Robert Martin who wants to marry her, and fling her at the head of Mr. Elton who doesn't. Precisely the same spirit — so he asserts — induces the welfare worker to conceive that her greater gentility (she sometimes calls it intelligence) warrants her gross intrusion into the lives of people who are her social inferiors. It is because they *are* her social in-

feriors that she dares to do it. The goodness of her intentions carries no weight. Emma's intentions are of the best, so far as she can separate them from her subconscious love of meddling.

This ingenious comparison is very painful to Emma's friends in the world of English readers. It cannot be that she is the ancestress of a type so vitally opposed to all that she holds correct and becoming. I do not share Mr. Chesterton's violent hostility to reformers, even when they have no standard of taste. There are questions too big and pertinacious for taste to control. I only think it hard that, feeling as he does, he should compare Emma's youthful indiscretions with more radical and disquieting activities. Emma is indiscreet, but she is only twenty-one. At twenty-two she is safely married to Mr. Knightley, and her period of indiscretion is over. At twenty-two she

has fulfilled her destiny, has stepped into line, and, as the centre of the social unit, is harmoniously adjusted, not to Highbury alone, but to civilization and the long traditions of the ages. That she should regard her lover, even in her first glowing moments of happiness, as an agreeable companion, and as an assistant in the care of her father, is characteristic. "Self-respect, humour and hardness of heart" are out of hand with romance. So much the better for Mr. Knightley, who will never find his emotions drained, his wisdom questioned, his authority denied, and who will come in time to believe that he, and not his wife, is "absolute."

> "The formal stars do travel so,
> That we their names and courses know;
> And he that on their changes looks
> Would think them govern'd by our books."

Miss Austen's views on marriage are familiar to her readers, and need no comment. They must have been drawn

from a careful survey of the society which surrounded her, a society composed for the most part of insensitive, unrebellious men and women who had the habit of making the best of things. At times the cynicism is a trifle too pronounced, as when Eleanor Dashwood asks herself why Mr. Palmer is so ill-mannered:

"His temper might perhaps be a little soured by finding, like many others of his sex, that through some unaccountable bias in favour of beauty, he was the husband of a very silly woman. But she knew that this kind of blunder was too common for any sensible man to be lastingly hurt by it."

At times simplicity and sincerity transcend the limits of likelihood, as when Elizabeth Watson says to her young sister:

"I should not like marrying a disagreeable man any more than yourself; but I do not think there are many very

disagreeable men. I think I could like any good-humoured man with a comfortable income."

At times a delicacy of touch lends distinction to the frankest worldliness, as when Mary Crawford generously applauds her brother Henry's determination to marry Fanny Price:

"I know that a wife you loved would be the happiest of women; and that even when you ceased to love, she would yet find in you the liberality and good breeding of a gentleman."

There is a lamentable lack of sentiment in even this last and happiest exposition of married life; but it expresses the whole duty of husbands, and the whole welfare of wives, as understood in the year 1814.

If Jane Austen and Thackeray wrought their heroines with perfect and painstaking accuracy, Scott's attitude was for the most part one of reprehensible indifference. His world

was run by men, and the ringleted sylphs of seventeen (the word "flapper" had not then cast discredit on this popular age) play very simple parts. Ruskin, it may be remembered, ardently admired these young ladies, and held them up as models of "grace, tenderness and intellectual power" to all his female readers. It never occurred to the great moralist, any more than to the great story-teller, that a girl is something more than a set of assorted virtues. "To Scott, as to most men of his age," observes an acute English critic, "woman was not an individual, but an institution — a toast that was drunk some time after Church and King."

Diana Vernon exists to be toasted. She has the

> "True blue
> And Mrs. Crewe"

quality associated in our minds with clinking glasses, and loud-spoken loy-

alty to Stuart or to Hanoverian. She has always caught the fancy of men, and has been likened in her day to Shakespeare's Beatrice, Rosalind and Portia, ladies of wit and distinction, who aspire to play adventurous rôles in the mad medley of life. She is as well fitted to provoke general admiration as Julia Mannering is to awaken personal regard. She is one of the five heroines of English fiction with whom Mr. Saintsbury avows no man of taste and spirit can fail to fall in love. He does not aspire, even in fancy, to marry her. His choice of a wife is Elizabeth Bennet. But for "occasional companionship" he gives Diana the prize.

Occasional companionship is all that we get of her in "Rob Roy." She enlivens the opening chapters very prettily, but is eliminated from the best and most vigorous episodes. My own impression is that Scott forgot all about Miss Vernon while he was happily en-

gaged with MacGregor, and the Bailie, and Andrew Fairservice; and that whenever he remembered her, he produced her on the stage as mysteriously and as irrelevantly as a conjurer lifts white rabbits out of his hat. Wrapped in a horseman's cloak, she comes riding under a frosty moon, gives Frank Osbaldistone a packet of valuable papers, bids him one of half-a-dozen solemn and final farewells, and disappears until the next trick is called. It was a good arrangement for Scott, who liked to have the decks cleared for action; but it makes Diana unduly fantastic and unreal.

So, too, does the weight of learning with which Rashleigh Osbaldistone has loaded her. Greek and Latin, history, science and philosophy, "as well as most of the languages of modern Europe," seem a large order for a girl of eighteen. Diana can also saddle and bridle a horse, clear a five-barred gate,

and fire a gun without winking. Yet she has a "tiny foot" — so at least Scott says — and she rides to hounds with her hair bound only by the traditional ribbon, so that her long tresses "stream on the breeze." The absurd and complicated plot in which she is involved is never disentangled. Dedicated in infancy to the cloister, which was at least unusual, she has been released by Rome from vows she has never taken, only on condition that she marries a cousin who is within the forbidden degree of kindred. Her numerous allusions to this circumstance — "The fatal veil was wrapped round me in my cradle," "I am by solemn contract the bride of Heaven, betrothed to the convent from the cradle" — distress and mystify poor Frank, who is not clever at best, and who accepts all her verdicts as irrevocable. Every time she bids him farewell, he believes it to be the end; and he loses the last flicker of

hope when she sends him a ring by — of all people under Heaven — Helen MacGregor, who delivers it with these cheerful words: "Young man, this comes from one whom you will never see more. If it is a joyless token, it is well fitted to pass through the hands of one to whom joy can never be known. Her last words were 'Let him forget me forever.'"

After which the astute reader is prepared to hear that Frank and Diana were soon happily married, without any consideration for cradle or for cloister, and without the smallest intervention from Rome.

Miss Vernon is one of Scott's characters for whom an original has been found. This in itself is a proof of vitality. Nobody would dream of finding the original of Lucy Bertram, or Isabella Wardour, or Edith Bellenden. As a matter of fact, the same prototype would do for all three, and half-

a-dozen more. But Captain Basil Hall expended much time and ingenuity in showing that Scott drew Diana after the likeness of Miss Jane Anne Cranstoun, a young lady of Edinburgh who married an Austrian nobleman, and left Scotland before the first of the Waverley Novels was written.

Miss Cranstoun was older than Scott, well born, well looking, a fearless horsewoman, a frank talker, a warm friend, and had some reputation as a wit. It was through her that the young man made his first acquaintance with Bürger's ballad, "Lenore," which so powerfully affected his imagination that he sat up all night, translating it into English verse. When it was finished, he repaired to Miss Cranstoun's house to show her the fruits of his labour. It was then half-past six, an hour which to that vigorous generation seemed seasonable for a morning call. Clarissa Harlowe grants Lovelace his interviews at five.

Miss Cranstoun listened to the ballad with more attention than Diana vouchsafed to her lover's translation from Ariosto (it was certainly better worth hearing), gave Scott his meed of praise and encouragement, and remained his friend, confidant and critic until her marriage separated them forever. There are certain points of resemblance between this clever woman and the high-spirited girl whom Justice Inglewood calls the "heath-bell of Cheviot," and MacGregor "a daft hempsie but a mettle quean." It may be that Diana owes her vitality to Scott's faithful remembrance of Miss Cranstoun, just as Jeanie Deans owes her rare and perfect naturalness to his clear conception of her noble prototype, Helen Walker. "A novel is history without documents, nothing to prove it," said Mr. John Richard Green; but unproved verities, as unassailable as unheard melodies, have a knack of surviving the rack and ruin of time.

When Thackeray courageously gave to the world "a novel without a hero," he atoned for his oversight by enriching it with two heroines, so carefully portrayed, so admirably contrasted, that each strengthens and perfects the other. Just as Elizabeth Tudor and Mary Stuart are etched together on the pages of history with a vivid intensity which singly they might have missed, so Amelia Sedley and Becky Sharp (*place à la vertu*) are etched together on the pages of fiction with a distinctness derived in part from the force of comparison. And just as readers of history have been divided for more than three hundred years into adherents of the rival queens, so readers of novels have been divided for more than seventy years into admirers of the rival heroines. "I have been Emmy's faithful knight since I was ten years old, and read 'Vanity Fair' somewhat stealthily," confessed Andrew Lang; and by

way of proving his allegiance, he laid at his lady's feet the stupidest repudiation of Rebecca ever voiced by a man of letters. To class her with Barnes Newcome and Mrs. Macknezie is an unpardonable affront. A man may be a perfect Sir Galahad without surrendering all sense of values and proportion.

When "Vanity Fair" was published, the popular verdict was against Becky. She so disedified the devout that reviewers, with the awful image of the British Matron before their eyes, dealt with her in a spirit of serious condemnation. It will be remembered that Taine, caring much for art and little for matrons, protested keenly against Thackeray's treatment of his own heroine, against the snubs and sneers and censures with which the English novelist thought fit to convince his English readers that he did not sympathize with misconduct. These readers hastened in turn to explain that Becky

was rightfully "odious" in her author's eyes, and that she was "created to be exposed," which sounds a little like the stern creed which held that men were created to be damned. Trollope, oppressed by her dissimilarity to Grace Crawley and to Lily Dale, openly mourned her shortcomings; and a writer in "Frazier's Magazine" assured the rank and file of the respectable that in real life they would shrink from her as from an infection. One voice only, that of an unknown critic in a little-read review, was raised in her defence. This brave man admitted without flinching her many sins, but added that he loved her.

The more lenient standards of our day have lifted Rebecca's reputation into the realm of disputable things. So distinguished a moralist as Mr. William Dean Howells praised her tepidly; being disposed in her favour by a distaste, not for Amelia, but for

Beatrix Esmond, whom he pronounced a "doll" and an "eighteenth-century marionette," and compared with whom he found Becky refreshingly real. As for Thackeray's harshness, Mr. Howells condoned it on the score of incomprehension. "His morality is the old conventional morality which we are now a little ashamed of; but in his time and place he could scarcely have had any other. After all, he was a simple soul, and strictly of his period."

This is an interesting point of view. To most of us "Vanity Fair" seems about as simple as "Ecclesiastes," the author of which was also "strictly of his period." Sir Sidney Low, the most trenchant critic whom the fates have raised to champion the incomparable Becky, is by way of thinking that in so far as Thackeray was a moralist, he was unfair to her; but that in so far as he was a much greater artist than a moralist, she emerges triumphant from

his hands. "She is the first embodiment in English fiction of the woman whose emotions are dominated by her intellect. She is a fighter against fate, and she wages war with unfailing energy, passing lightly, as great warriors do, over the bodies of the killed and wounded."

She does more. She snatches a partial victory out of the jaws of a crushing defeat. The stanchest fighter expects some backing from fate, some good cards to lay on the table. But Becky's fortunes are in Thackeray's hands, and he rules against her at every turn. Life and death are her inexorable opponents. Miss Crawley recovers (which she has no business to do) from a surfeit of lobster, when by dying she would have enriched Rawdon, already in love with Rebecca. Lady Crawley lives just long enough to spoil Becky's chance of marrying Sir Pitt. It is all very hard and very wrong. The little

governess had richly earned Miss Crawley's money by her patient care of that ungrateful invalid. She would have been kind and good-tempered to Sir Pitt, whereas his virtuous son and daughter-in-law (the lady Jane whom Thackeray never ceases to praise) leave the poor old paralytic to the care of a coarse, untrained and cruel servant. Becky is not the only sufferer by the bad luck which makes her from start to finish, "a fighter against fate."

Sir Sidney is by no means content with the somewhat murky twilight in which we take leave of this great little adventuress, with the atmosphere of charity lists, bazaars and works of piety which depressingly surrounds her. He is sure she made a most charming and witty old lady, and that she eventually won over Colonel Dobbin (in spite of Amelia's misgivings) by judicious praise of the "History of the Punjaub." And I am equally sure that she never

suffered herself to lose so valuable an asset as young Rawdon. Becky's indifference to her son is the strongest card that Thackeray plays. By throwing into high relief the father's proud affection for the boy (who is an uncommonly nice little lad), he deepens and darkens the mother's unconcern. Becky is impervious to the charm of childhood, and she is not affectionate. Once in a while she is moved by a generous impulse; but the crowded cares and sordid scheming of her life leave no room for sensibility.

Nevertheless, if the Reverend Bute Crawley and his household look upon little Rawdon with deep respect as the possible heir of Queen's Crawley, "between whom and the title there was only the sickly pale child, Pitt Binkie," it is unlikely that Rebecca the far-seeing would ignore the potential greatness of her son. She cannot afford to lose any chance, or any combination of

chances, in the hazardous game she plays. There is nothing like the spectacle of this game in English letters. To watch Becky manipulate her brother-in-law, Sir Pitt, is a never-ending delight. He is dull, pompous, vain, ungenerous. He has inherited the fortune which should have been her husband's. Yet there is no hatred in her heart, nor any serious malice. Hatred, like love, is an emotional extravagance, and Becky's accounts are very strictly kept.

Therefore, when she persuades the Baronet to spend a week in the little house on Curzon Street, even Thackeray admits that she is sincerely happy to have him there. She comes bustling and blushing into his room with a scuttle of coals; she cooks excellent dishes for his dinner; she gives him Lord Steyne's White Hermitage to warm his frozen blood, telling him it is a cheap wine which Rawdon has picked up in France; she sits by his side in the

firelight, stitching a shirt for her little son; she plays every detail of her part with the careful and conscientious art of a Dutch painter composing a domestic scene; and she asks no unreasonable return for her labours. Rawdon, who does nothing, is disgusted because his brother gives them no money; but Rebecca, who does everything, is content with credit. Sir Pitt, as the head of the family, is the corner-stone upon which she rears the fabric of her social life.

The exact degree of Becky's innocence and guilt is a matter of slight importance. There is no goodness in her to be spoiled or saved. To try to soften our judgment by pleading one or two acts of contemptuous kindness is absurd. Her qualities are great qualities: valour, and wit, and audacity, and patience, and an ungrumbling acceptance of fate. No one recognizes these qualities except Lord Steyne, who has a greatness of his own. It will be remem-

bered that on one occasion he gives Rebecca eleven hundred pounds to discharge her indebtedness to Miss Briggs; and subsequently discovers that the amount due the "sheep-dog" is six hundred pounds, and that Rebecca has been far too thrifty to pay any of it out of the sum bestowed on her for that purpose. He is not angry at being outwitted, as a small and stupid man would have been. He is charmed.

"His lordship's admiration for Becky rose immeasurably at this proof of her cleverness. Getting the money was nothing — but getting double the sum she wanted, and paying nobody — it was a magnificent stroke. 'What an accomplished little devil it is!' he thought. 'She beats all the women I have ever seen in the course of my well-spent life. They are babies compared to her. I am a green-horn myself, and a fool in her hands — an old fool. She is unsurpassable in lies.'"

With which testimony, candid, fervent, and generous withal, Becky's case can be considered closed. Discredited, humiliated, and punished in the irrepressible interests of morality, she is left stranded amid life's minor respectabilities which must have irked her sorely; but which Thackeray plainly considered to be far beyond her merits. I hope it comforts her in that shadowy land where dwell the immortals of fiction to know that her shameless little figure, flitting dauntlessly from venture to venture, from hazard to hazard, has never been without appreciative observers. I had almost said appreciative and pitying observers; but Becky's is the last ghost in Christendom whom I should dare to affront with pity.

The Preacher at Large

THE spirit of Hannah More is abroad in the land. It does not preach the same code of morals that the good Hannah preached in her lifetime, but it preaches its altered code with her assurance and with her continuity. Miss More preached to the poor the duty of an unreasonable and unmanly content, and to the rich the duty of personal and national smugness. Her successors are more than likely to urge upon rich and poor the paramount duty of revolt. The essence of preaching, however, is not doctrine, but didacticism. Beliefs and behaviour are subject to geographical and chronological conditions, but human nature lives and triumphs in the sermon.

Hannah More was not licensed to preach. She would have paled at the thought of a lady taking orders, or

climbing the pulpit steps. She had no intellectual gifts. Her most intimate critic, the Honourable Augustine Birrell (the only living man who confesses to the purchase of her works in nineteen calf-bound volumes, which he subsequently buried in his garden), pronounced her to be "an encyclopædia of all literary vices." Yet for forty years she told her countrymen what they should do, and what they should leave undone, in return for which censorship they paid her boundless deference and thirty thousand pounds, a great deal of money in those days.

Miss More is a connecting link between the eighteenth century, which moralized, and the nineteenth century, which preached. Both were didactic, but, as Mr. Austin Dobson observes, "didactic with a difference." Addison was characterized in his day as "a parson in a tie-wig," an unfriendly,

but not altogether inaccurate, description, the tie-wig symbolizing a certain gentlemanly aloofness from potent and primitive emotions. Religion is a primitive emotion, and the eighteenth century (*ce siècle sans âme*) was, in polite life, singularly shy of religion; reserving it for the pulpit, and handling it there with the caution due to an explosive. Crabbe, who also lapped over into the nineteenth century, was reproached by his friends for talking about Heaven and Hell in his sermons, "as though he had been a Methodist."

From such indiscretions the tie-wig preserved the eighteenth-century moralists. Addison meditates for a morning in Westminster Abbey, and the outcome of his meditation is that the poets have no monuments, and the monuments no poets. Steele walks the London streets, jostling against vice and misery, and pauses to tell us that a sturdy beggar extracted from him the

price of a drink by pleading mournfully that all his family had died of thirst; a jest which took easily with the crowd, and might be trusted to raise a sympathetic laugh to-day. It is plain that these gentlemen felt without saying what Henry Adams said without feeling, that "morality is a private and costly luxury," and so forbore to urge it upon a bankrupt world.

The paradox of our own time is that clergymen, whose business it is to preach, are listened to impatiently, while laymen, whose business it is to instruct or to amuse, are encouraged to preach. I open two magazines, and am confronted by prophetic papers on "The Vanishing Sermon," and "Will Preaching Become Obsolete?" I exchange them for two others, and find lengthy articles entitled "Can We Control Our Own Morals?" and "Spiritual Possibilities of Business Life." Now, if a disquisition on "Spiritual Possi-

bilities of Business Life" be not a sermon, of what elements is a sermon composed? Yet when I endeavour to ascertain these possibilities, I read that business men often refuse to listen to professional preaching, because, while their democratic ideals, their enthusiasm for human values, and their passion for scientific perfection in their products "leave them not far from the Kingdom of Heaven," the Church, unhappily for itself, "has not been big enough or strong enough to captivate their imagination, and hold their allegiance."

This would seem to imply that business men are too good to go to church — a novel and, I should think, popular point of view. Congregations hear little like it from the pulpit, the average clergyman being unable to observe any signs of a commercial Utopia, and having a tiresome and Jeremiah-like habit of pointing out defects. As for

asking a group of magazine-readers if they can control their own morals, the query is a vaporous one, not meant to be answered scientifically, but after a formula settled and approved. Even the concession to modernism implied in its denial of religion as a compelling force gets us no nearer to our goal. "The faith we need is not necessarily faith in any supernatural help; but only in the demonstrated fact of the possibility of controlling our own minds and morals by going at it in the right way." The tendency of a simple truth, that abstraction which we all admire, to develop into a truism, is no less noticeable when set forth in the persuasiveness of print than when delivered with ecclesiastical authority.

Personally, I cannot conceive of a sermonless world. The preacher's function is too manifest to be ignored, his message too direct to be diverted. Joubert said truly that devout men

and women listen with pleasure to dull sermons, because they recognize the legitimate relation between priest and people, and their minds are attuned to receptivity. And if a dull sermon can command the attention and awaken the sympathy of a congregation honest enough to admit that dullness is the paramount note of human intercourse, and that it is as well developed in the listeners as in the speaker, think of the power which individual intelligence derives from collective authority. This is the combination which so fascinated Henry Adams when he speculated upon the ecclesiasticism of the thirteenth century; its nobility, lucidity and weight. "The great theologians were also architects who undertook to build a Church Intellectual, corresponding, bit by bit, to the Church Administrative, both expressing—and expressed by—the Church Architectural."

With the coming of the printed

word, the supreme glory of the spoken word departed. Reading is the accepted substitute for oratory as for conversation, a substitute so cheap, so accessible, so accommodating, that its day will wane only with the waning warmth of the sun, or the exhaustion and collapse of civilization. Yet even under the new dispensation, even with the amazing multiplicity of creeds (twenty-four religions to one sauce, lamented Talleyrand a hundred years ago), even though ecclesiastical architecture has ceased to express anything but a love of comfort and an understanding of acoustics, the preacher holds his own. There are always people interested in the relation of their souls to God; and when it happens that a man is born into the world capable of convincing them that the only thing of importance in life is the relation of their souls to God, he becomes a maker of history.

John Wesley was such a man. I read recently that, when he was preaching at Tullamore, a large cat leaped from the rafters upon a woman's head, and ran over the heads and shoulders of the closely packed congregation. "But none of them cried out any more than if it had been a butterfly." *There* was a test of the preacher's supremacy. What other influence could have been so absolute and coercive? When I was a very little girl I was taken to see Edwin Booth play "Hamlet," in the old Walnut Street theatre of Philadelphia. That night a cat entered with the ghost, and paced sedately in his wake across the ramparts of Elsinore. The audience shouted its amusement, and the poignancy of a great scene, interpreted by a great actor, was temporarily lost. "Spellbound" is a word in common use, expressing, as a rule, very ordinary attention. Booth cast a spell, but it

was easily broken. Wesley cast a spell which defied both fear and laughter. Nothing short of dynamite could have distracted that Tullamore congregation from the business it had on hand.

That the sermon was tyrannical in the days of its pride and power is a truth which cannot be gainsaid. Eloquence in the pulpit has no more bowels for its victims than has eloquence on the rostrum. History is full of instances that move our souls to wonder. When Darnley, new wedded to Mary Stuart, and seeing himself in the rôle of peacemaker, went to hear Knox preach in Saint Giles', that uncompromising divine likened him to Ahab, who incurred the wrath of Jehovah by acquiescing in the idolatry of Jezebel, his wife. James Melville says that when Knox preached, "he was like to ding the pulpit to blads, and fly out of it." Darnley, furious, or frightened, or both, left the church while the victorious preacher was still

marshalling the hosts of Israel to combat.

Charles the Second was wont to recall with bitter mirth a certain Sunday in Edinburgh when he was forced by his loyal Scotch subjects to hear six sermons, a heavy price to pay even for loyalty. Paris may have been worth one mass to Henry of Navarre; but all Scotland was not worth six sermons to Charles Stuart, and the memory of that Sunday sweetened his return to France and to freedom.

It is a far cry from Knox hurling the curses of his tribal God at alien tribesmen, from Wesley convicting his narrow world "of sin, and of justice, and of judgment," even from that "good, honest and painful sermon" which Dr. Pepys heard one Sunday morning with inward misgivings and troubled stirrings of the soul, to the sterilized discourse which offends against no assortment of beliefs, and no stand-

ards of taste. Frederick Locker gives us in his "Confidences" a grim description of the funeral services of George Henry Lewes, at Highgate Cemetery. Twelve gentlemen of rationalistic views had gathered in the mortuary chapel, and to them a thirteenth gentleman, also of rationalistic views, but who had taken orders somewhere, delivered an address, "half apologizing for suggesting the possible immortality of some of our souls."

This may indicate the progress of the ages; but does it also indicate the progress of the ages that the moral essay, which was wont to be satiric, is now degenerating into the printed sermon, which is sure to be censorious; that the very men who once charmed us with the lightness of their touch and the keen edge of their humour are now preaching thunderously? For years Mr. Chesterton gave us reason to be grateful that we had learned to read.

Who so debonair when he was gay, who so incisive when he was serious, who so ready with his thrust, who so understanding in his sympathy? We trusted him never to preach and never to scold, and he has betrayed our trust by doing both. He calls it prophesying; but prophesying is preaching, plus scolding, and no one knows this better than he does.

The earth is a bad little planet, and we hope that other planets are happier and better behaved. But the vials of Mr. Chesterton's wrath are emptied on the heads of people who do not read him, and who have no idea that they are being anathematized. Swift used to say that most sermons were aimed at men and women who never went to church, and the same sort of thing happens to-day. We, Mr. Chesterton's chosen readers, are not capitalists, or philanthropists, or prohibitionists, or any of the things he abhors; and we

wish he would leave these gentry alone, and write for us again with the old shining wit, the old laughter, the old mockery, which was like a dash of salt on the flavourless porridge of life.

Twenty-one years ago Mr. G. Lowes Dickinson published an American edition of the "Letters from a Chinese Official," a species of sermon, it is true, but preached delicately and understandingly, in suave and gleaming sentences, its burden of thought half veiled by the graceful lightness of its speech. American readers took that book to heart. We could not make over the United States into a second China. "Some god this severance rules." But we accepted in the spirit of reason a series of criticisms which were reasonably conveyed to our intelligence, and a great deal of good they did us.

Much has happened in twenty-one years, and few of us are so light-

hearted or so reasonable as of yore. Is it because we have grown impatient of strictures that Mr. Dickinson's sermons now seem to us a trifle heavy, his reproaches more than a trifle harsh? We did not mind being compared adversely to China, but we do mind being blamed for Germany's transgressions. When, as the mouthpiece of suffering Europe, Mr. Dickinson says, "America is largely responsible for our condition," a flat denial seems in order. America did not invade Belgium, she did not burn French towns, she did not sink merchant ships. It seems to be Mr. Dickinson's impression that our entrance, not without provocation, into the war "prolonged" the struggle, to the grievous injury of the Allies as well as of the Central Powers. There is a veracious paragraph in one of Mr. Tarkington's "Penrod" stories, which describes the bewilderment of an ordinary American

boy who does something he cannot well help doing, and who is thrashed or rewarded by an irate or delighted father, according to a point of view which is a veiled mystery to him. So, too, the ordinary American adult gapes confusedly when a British pacifist tells him that, by fighting the war to a finish, he and his nation are to blame for the economic ruin of Europe.

There is the same misunderstanding between unprofessional as between sectarian preachers, and the same air of thoughtful originality when they deal with the obvious and ascertained. When I see a serious essayist hailed as "the first wholly realistic and deductive moralist" that the country, or the century, has produced, I naturally examine his deductions with interest. What I find is a severe, but well-merited, denunciation of the civilized world as hypocritical, because its practice is not in accord with its profession.

Readers of the New Testament will recall the same divergence between the practice and the profession of the Jews two thousand years ago. It has been neither unknown nor unobserved in any age, in any land, amid any people since.

There were a great many clergymen preaching in Hannah More's day, and there are a great many clergymen preaching now. Churches and temples and halls of every conceivable denomination, and of no conceivable denomination, are open to us. There is something fair and square in going to a place of which sermons are the natural product, and hearing one. There is also something fair and square in taking a volume of sermons down from the shelf, and reading one. I am not of those who believe that a sermon, like a speech, needs to be spoken. A great deal of quiet thinking goes with the printed page, and the reader has

one obvious advantage over the listener. He can close the book at any moment without disedifying a congregation. But just as Hannah More intruded her admonitions into the free spaces of life, so her successors betray us into being sermonized when we are pursuing our week-day avocations in a week-day mood, which is neither fair not square. It is the attitude of the nursery governess (Hannah was the greatest living exemplar of the nursery governess), and there is no escape from its unauthorized supervision.

When a hitherto friendly magazine prints nine pages of sermon under a disingenuous title suggestive of domestic economy, and beginning brightly, "What right has any one to preach?" we feel a sense of betrayal. Any one has a right to preach (the laxity of church discipline is to blame); but a sense of honour, or a sense of humour, or a sense of humanity should debar

an author from pretending he is not preaching when he writes like this: "If we have a desire that seems to us contrary to our duty, it means that there is a conflict within us; it means either that our sense of duty is not a sense of the whole self, or that our desire is not of the whole self. This then is to be aimed at — the identity of duty and desire." And so on, and so on, through nine virtuous pages. The reluctance on the part of magazine preachers to refer openly to God tends to prolixity. Thomas à Kempis, reflecting on the same situation, which is not new, briefly recommends us to submit our wills to the will of God. Monk though he was, he understood that duty and desire are on opposite sides of the camp, and refuse to be harmoniously blended. This is why living Christians are called, and will be called to the end of time, the church militant.

A sanguine preacher in "The Popular Science Monthly" holds out a hope that duty and desire may be ultimately blended through an adroit application of eugenics. What we need, and have not got, is a race which "instinctively and spontaneously" does right. Therefore it behooves us to superinduce, through grafting and transplanting, "the preservation and perpetuation of a human stock that may be depended upon to lead moral lives without the necessity of much social compulsion." It sounds interesting; and though Mr. Chesterton loudly asserts that eugenics degrade the race, we are too well accustomed to these divergencies on the part of our preachers to take them deeply to heart.

Mr. Chesterton has also used strong language (understatement is not his long suit) in denouncing "the diabolical idiocy that can regard beer or tobacco as in some sort evil or unseemly";

and I am disposed, in a mild way, to agree with him. Yet when some time ago I read a pleasantly worded little sermon on "An Artist's Morality," being curious to know how a moral artist differed from a moral chemist, or a moral accountant, the only concrete instance of morality adduced was the abandonment of tobacco. As soon as the artist resolved to amend his blameless life, he made the discovery that its chief element of discord was his pipe. "As a thing of sudden nastiness, I threw it out of the window, drawing in, almost reverently, a deep breath of cool October air."

It is possible that the American public likes being preached to, just as Hannah More's British public liked being preached to. This would account for the little sermons thrown on the screen between moving pictures, brief admonishments pointing out the obvious moral of the drama,

deploring the irregularity of masculine affections, the soulless selfishness of wealth; and asserting with colossal impudence that the impelling purpose of the entertainment is to bring home to the hearts of men an understanding of the misery they cause. As it is the rule of moving-picture plays to change their scenes with disconcerting speed, but to leave all explanatory texts on the screen long enough to be learned by heart, these moral precepts dominate the show. The franker its revelations, the more precepts are needed to offset them. Rows of decent and respectable men, who accompany their decent and respectable wives, are flattered by being accused of sins which they have never aspired to commit.

"I must acknowledge that some writers upon ethical questions have been men of fair moral character," said Sir Leslie Stephen in a moment of expansion which was no less wise

than generous, seeing that he was himself the author of two volumes of lay sermons, originally delivered before ethical societies. Didacticism can go no further than in these monitory papers. There is one on "The Duties of Authors," which is calculated to drive a light-minded or light-hearted neophyte from a profession where he is expected in his most unguarded moments to influence morally his equally unguarded readers. But Sir Leslie played the game according to rule. A plainly worded notice on the fly-leaf warned the public that the sermons were sermons, not critical studies, or Alpine adventures. If they seem to us overcrowded with counsel, this is only because they are non-religious in their character. When religion is excluded from a sermon, there is too much room left for morality. Without the vast compelling presence of God, the activities of men grow feverish,

and lose the "imperious sweetness" of sanctity.

If our preachers are trying to recivilize humanity, it behooves us, perhaps, to be more patient with their methods. All civilizing formulas are uneasy possessions. Ruskin evolved one, and no man could have been more sincere or more insistent in applying it. So painfully did he desire that his readers should think as he did, that he grew to look upon the world with a jaundiced eye because it was necessarily full of people who thought differently. Even Hannah More had a little formula for the correction of England; but it gave her no uneasiness, because she could not conceive of herself as a failure. Advice flowed from her as it flows from her followers to-day. There was but one of her, which was too much. There are many of them, and great is their superfluity. The "Vanishing Sermon" has not vanished. It has

only changed its habitat. It has forsaken the pulpit, and taken up quarters in what was formerly the stronghold of literature.

The Battle-Field of Education

READERS of Jane Austen will remember how Mr. Darcy and Miss Bingley defined to their own satisfaction the requirements of an accomplished woman. Such a one, said Miss Bingley, must add to ease of manner and address "a thorough knowledge of music, singing, drawing, dancing, and the modern languages." To which Mr. Darcy subjoined: "All this she must possess, and she must have something more substantial in the improvement of her mind by extensive reading." Whereupon Elizabeth Bennet stoutly affirmed that she had never met a woman in whom "capacity, taste, application and elegance" were so admirably and so formidably united.

Between an accomplished woman in Miss Austen's day and an educated

man in ours, there are many steps to climb; but the impression conveyed by those who now seek to define the essentials of education is that, like Miss Bingley and Mr. Darcy, they ask too much. Also that they are unduly influenced by the nature of the things they themselves chance to know. Hence the delight of agitators in drawing up lists of ascertainable facts, and severely catechizing the public. They forget, or perhaps they never read, the serene words of Addison (an educated man) concerning the thousand and one matters with which he would not burden his mind "for a Vatican."

With every century that rolls over the world there is an incalculable increase of knowledge. It ranges backward and forward, from the latest deciphering of an Assyrian tablet to the latest settling of a Balkan boundary-line; from a disconcerting fossil dug out of its prehistoric mud to a new

explosive warranted to destroy a continent. Obviously an educated man, even a very highly educated man, must be content, in the main, with a "modest and wise ignorance." Intelligence, energy, leisure, opportunity — these things are doled out to him in niggardly fashion; and with his beggar's equipment he confronts the vastness of time and space, the years the world has run, the forces which have sped her on her way, and the hoarded thinking of humanity.

Compared with this huge area of "general information," how firm and final were the educational limits of a young Athenian in the time of Plato! The things he did not have to know fill our encyclopædias. Copra and celluloid were as remote from his field of vision as were the Reformation and the battle of Gettysburg. But ivory he had, and the memory of Marathon, and the noble pages of Thucydides. That there

were Barbarians in the world, he knew as well as we do. Some, like the Ethiops, dwelt so far away that Homer called them "blameless." Some were so perilously near that the arts of war grew with the arts of peace. For books he had a certain delicate scorn, caught from his master, Plato, who never forgave their lack of reticence, their fashion of telling everything to every reader. But the suave and incisive conversation of other Athenians taught him intellectual lucidity, and the supreme beauty of the spoken word. "Late and laboriously," says Josephus, "did the Greeks acquire their knowledge of Greek." That they acquired it to some purpose is evidenced by the fact that the graduate of an American college must have some knowledge of Plato's thinking, if he is to be called educated. Where else shall he see the human intellect, trained to strength and symmetry like the body of an

athlete, exercising its utmost potency and its utmost charm? Where else shall he find a philosophy which has "in all ages ravished the hearts of men"?

A curious symptom of our own day is that we have on one hand a strong and deep dissatisfaction with the mental equipment of young Americans, and on the other an ever-increasing demand for freedom, for self-development, for doing away with serious and severe study. The ideal school is one in which the pupil is at liberty to get up and leave the class if it becomes irksome, and in which the teacher is expected to comport himself like the kind-hearted captain of the Mantelpiece. The ideal college is one which prepares its students for remunerative positions, which teaches them how to answer the kind of questions that captains of industry may ask. One of the many critics of our educational system has recently com-

plained that college professors are not practical. "The undergraduate," he says, "sits during the four most impressionable years of his life under the tuition and influence of highly trained, greatly devoted, and sincere men, who are financial incompetents, who have as little interest in, or understanding of, business as has the boy himself."

It does not seem to occur to this gentleman that if college professors knew anything about finance, they would probably not remain college professors. Learning and wealth have never run in harness since Cadmus taught Thebes the alphabet. It would be a brave man who should say which was the better gift; but one thing is sure: unless we are prepared to grant the full value of scholarship which adds nothing to the wealth of nations, or to the practical utilities of life, we shall have only partial results from education. And such scholarship can never

be generally approved. It is, and must forever remain, says Augustine Birrell, "in the best and noblest sense of a good and noble word, essentially unpopular."

The educational substitutes, now in vogue, are many, and varied, and, of their kind, good. They can show results, and results that challenge competition. Mr. Samuel Gompers, for example, writes with pardonable complacency of himself: "When I think of the education I got in the London streets, the training acquired by work in the shop, the discipline growing out of attempts to build an organization to accomplish definite results, of the rich cultural opportunities through human contacts, I know that my educational opportunities have been very unusual."

This is, in a measure, true, and it is not the first time that such opportunities have been lauded to the skies. "If a lad does not learn in the streets,"

said Robert Louis Stevenson, "it is because he has no faculty of learning." — "Books! Don't talk to me of books!" said Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough. "My books are cards and men." It will even be remembered that old Weller boasted to Mr. Pickwick of the tuition he had afforded Sam by turning him at a tender age into the London gutters, to learn what lessons they could teach.

Nevertheless, there is an education that owes nothing to streets, or to workshops, or to games of chance. It was not in the "full, vivid, instructive hours of truancy" that Stevenson acquired his knowledge of the English language, which he wrote with unexampled vigour and grace. It is not "human contact" that can be always trusted to teach men how to pronounce that language correctly. This is an educational nicety disregarded by a practical and busy world. One of the best-informed women I ever knew, who had been honoured

by several degrees, and who had turned her knowledge to good account, could never pronounce the test word, America. One of the ablest and most influential lawyers I ever knew, a college man with an imposing library, came no nearer to success. The lady said "Armorica," as if she were speaking of ancient Brittany. The gentleman said "Amurrica," probably to make himself intelligible to the large and patriotic audiences which he addressed so frequently and so successfully. The license allowed to youth may be held accountable for such Puck's tricks as these, as well as for grammatical lapses. A superintendent of public schools in Illinois has decided on his own authority that common usage may supplant time-worn rules of speech; and that such a sentence as "It is I," being "outlawed" by common usage, need no longer be forced upon children who prefer to say "It is me."

Because the direct products of education are so limited, and the by-products of such notable importance, we permit ourselves to speak contemptuously concerning things which must be learned from books, without any deep understanding of things which must be learned from people armed with books, and backed by the authority of tradition. When Goethe said that the education of an Englishman gave him courage to be what nature had made him, he illuminated, after his wont, a somewhat shadowy subject. William James struck the same note, and amplified it, not too exhaustively, in "Talks to Teachers": "An English gentleman is a bundle of specifically qualified reactions, a creature who, for all the emergencies of life, has his line of behaviour distinctly marked out for him in advance."

If this be the result of a system which, to learned Germans, lucid Frenchmen,

and progressive Americans, has seemed inadequate, they may revise, or at least suspend, their judgment. And Englishmen who have humorously lamented the wasted years of youth ("May I be taught Greek in the next world if I know what I *did* learn at school!" said the novelist, James Payn), need no longer be under the obligation of expressing more dissatisfaction than they feel.

In the United States the educational by-products are less clear-cut, because the force of tradition is weaker, and because too many boys are taught too long by women. The difficulty of obtaining male teachers has accustomed us to this anomaly, and we have even been heard to murmur sweet phrases concerning the elevating nature of feminine influence. But the fact remains that a boy is destined to grow into a man, and for this contingency no woman can prepare him. Only men,

and men of purpose and principle, can harden him into the mould of manhood. It is a question of character, which great by-product of education cannot be safely undervalued even in a busy and clever age. "It was always through enfeeblement of character," says Gustave Le Bon, "and not through enfeeblement of intellect, that the great peoples disappeared from history."

And this truth paves the way for an assertion which, however controvertible, is not without strong support. Of all the direct products of education (of education as an end in itself, and not as an approach to something else), a knowledge of history is most essential. So, at least, it seems to me, though I speak with diffidence, being well aware that makers of history, writers of history, and teachers of history, have agreed that it is an elusive, deceptive and disputable study. Yet it is the heart of all things, and every intel-

lectual by-path leads to this central theme. Most firmly do I believe with "the little Queen-Anne man" that

"The proper study of mankind is man";

and how shall we reach him save through the pages of history? It is the foundation upon which are reared the superstructures of sociology, psychology, philosophy and ethics. It is our clue to the problems of the race. It is the gateway through which we glimpse the noble and terrible things which have stirred the human soul.

A cultivated American poet has said that men of his craft "should know history inside out, and take as much interest in the days of Nebuchadnezzar as in the days of Pierpont Morgan." This is a spacious demand. The vast sweep of time is more than one man can master, and the poet is absolved by the terms of his art from severe study. He may know as much history as Matthew

Arnold, or as little as Herrick, who lived through great episodes, and did not seem to be aware of them. But Mr. Benét is wise in recognizing the inspiration of history, its emotional and imaginative appeal. New York and Pierpont Morgan have their tale to tell; and so has the dark shadow of the Babylonian conqueror, who was so feared that, while he lived, his subjects dared not laugh; and when he died, and went to his appointed place, the poor inmates of Hell trembled lest he had come to rule over them in place of their master, Satan.

"The study of Plutarch and ancient historians," says George Trevelyan, "rekindled the breath of liberty and of civic virtue in modern Europe." The mental freedom of the Renaissance was the gift of the long-ignored and reinstated classics, of a renewed and generous belief in the vitality of human thought, the richness of human experi-

ence. Apart from the intellectual precision which this kind of knowledge confers, it is indirectly as useful as a knowledge of mathematics or of chemistry. How shall one nation deal with another in this heaving and turbulent world unless it knows something of more importance than its neighbour's numerical and financial strength — namely, the type of men it breeds. This is what history teaches, if it is studied carefully and candidly.

How did it happen that the Germans, so well informed on every other point, wrought their own ruin because they failed to understand the mental and moral make-up of Frenchmen, Englishmen and Americans? What kind of histories did they have, and in what spirit did they study them? The Scarborough raid proved them as ignorant as children of England's temper and reactions. The inhibitions imposed upon the port of New York, and the

semi-occasional ship which they granted us leave to send from it, proved them more ignorant than kittens of America's liveliest idiosyncrasies.

In the United States an impression prevails that the annals of Asia and of Europe are too long and too complicated for our consideration. Every now and then some educator, or some politician who controls educators, makes the "practical" suggestion that no history prior to the American Revolution shall be taught in the public schools. Every now and then some able financier affirms that he would not give a fig for *any* history, and marshals the figures of his income to prove its uselessness.

Yet our vast heterogeneous population is forever providing problems which call for an historical solution; and our foreign relations would be clarified by a greater accuracy of knowledge. To the ignorance of the average Congressman and of the average Sena-

tor must be traced their most conspicuous blunders. Back of every man lies the story of his race. The Negro is more than a voter. He has a history which may be ascertained without undue effort. Haiti, San Domingo, Liberia, all have their tales to tell. The Irishman is more than a voter. He has a long, interesting and instructive history. It pays us to be well informed about these things. "The passionate cry of ignorance for power" rises in our ears like the death-knell of civilization. Down through the ages it has sounded, now covetous and threatening, now irrepressible and triumphant. We know what every one of its conquests has cost the human race; yet we are content to rest our security upon oratorical platitudes and generalities, upon the dim chance of a man being reborn in the sacrament of citizenship.

In addition to the things that it is useful to know, there are things that it

is pleasant to know, and pleasure is a very important by-product of education. It has been too long the fashion to deny, or at least to decry, this species of enjoyment. "He that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow," says Ecclesiastes; and Sir Thomas Browne musically bewails the dark realities with which "the unhappiness of our knowledge too nearly acquainteth us." But it was probably the things he did, rather than the things he knew, which soured the taste of life in the Hebrew's mouth; and as for Sir Thomas Browne, no man ever derived a more lasting satisfaction from scholarship. His erudition, like his religion, was pure profit. His temperament saved him from the loudness of controversy. His life was rich within.

This mental ease is not so much an essential of education as the reward of education. It makes smooth the reader's path; it involves the capacity to

think, and to take delight in thinking; it is the keynote of subtle and animated talk. It presupposes a somewhat varied list of acquirements; but it has no official catalogue, and no market value. It emphatically does not consist in knowing inventories of things, useful or otherwise; still less in imparting this knowledge to the world. Macaulay, Croker, and Lord Brougham were men who knew things on a somewhat grand scale, and imparted them with impressive accuracy; yet they were the blight rather than the spur of conversation. Even the "more cultivated portion of the ignorant," to borrow a phrase of Stevenson's, is hostile to lectures, unless the lecturer has the guarantee of a platform, and his audience sits before him in serried and somnolent rows.

The decline and fall of the classics has not been unattended by controversy. No other educational system was ever so valiantly and nobly de-

fended. For no other have so many masterly arguments been marshalled in vain. There was a pride and a splendour in the long years' study of Greek. It indicated in England that the nation had reached a height which permitted her this costly inutility, this supreme intellectual indulgence. Greek was an adornment to the minds of her men, as jewels were an adornment to the bodies of her women. No practical purpose was involved. Sir Walter Scott put the case with his usual simplicity and directness in a letter to his second son, Charles, who had little aptitude for study: "A knowledge of the classical languages has been fixed upon, not without good reason, as the mark of a well-educated young man; and though people may scramble into distinction without it, it is always with difficulty, just like climbing over a wall instead of giving your ticket at the door."

In the United States we have never been kindly disposed towards extravagance of this order. During the years of our comparative poverty, when few citizens aspired to more than a competence, there was still money enough for Latin, and now and then for Greek. There was still a race of men with slender incomes and wide acquirements, to whom scholarship was a dearly bought but indestructible delight. Now that we have all the money there is, it is universally understood that Americans cannot afford to spend any of it on the study of "the best that has been known and thought in the world."

Against this practical decision no argument avails. Burke's plea for the severity of the foundation upon which rest the principles of taste carries little weight, because our standard of taste is genial rather than severe. The influence of Latinity upon English literature concerns us even less, because

prose and verse are emancipated from the splendid shackles they wore with such composure. But the mere reader, who is not an educational economist, asks himself now and then in what fashion Milton and Dryden would have written, if vocational training had supplanted the classics in their day. And to come nearer to our time, and closer to our modern and moderate appreciations, how would the "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard," and the lines "On the Death of a Favourite Cat" have been composed, had Gray not spent all his life in the serene company of the Latins?

It was easy to define the requirements of an educated man in the year 1738, when Gray, a bad mathematician and an admirable classicist, left Cambridge. It is uncommonly difficult to define them to-day. Dr. Goodnow, speaking a few years ago to the graduating class of Johns Hopkins University, summed

up collegiate as well as professional education as the acquisition of the capacity to do work of a specific character. "Knowledge can come only as the result of experience. What is learned in any other way seldom has such reality as to make it an actual part of our lives."

A doctor cannot afford to depend too freely on experience, valuable though it may be, because the high prices it asks are paid by his patients. But so far as professional training goes, Dr. Goodnow stood on firm ground. All it undertakes to do is to enable students to work along chosen lines — to turn them into doctors, lawyers, priests, mining engineers, analytical chemists, expert accountants. They may or may not be educated men in the liberal sense of the word. They may or may not understand allusions which are current in the conversation of educated people. Such conversation is far from encyclo-

pædic; but it is interwoven with knowledge, and rich in agreeable disclosures. An adroit participant can avoid obvious pitfalls; but it is not in dodging issues and concealing deficits that the pleasures of companionship lie. I once heard a sparkling and animated lady ask Mr. Henry James (who abhorred being questioned) if he did not think American women talked better than English women. "Yes," said the great novelist gently, "they are more ready and much more brilliant. They rise to every suggestion. But" — as if moved by some strain of recollection — "English women so often know what they are talking about."

Vocational training and vocational guidance are a little like intensive farming. They are obvious measures for obvious results; they economize effort; they keep their goal in view. If they "pander to cabbages," they produce as many and as fine cabbages as

the soil they till can yield. Their exponents are most convincing when they are least imaginative. The Dean of Harvard's Graduate School of Business Administration says bluntly that it is hard for a young man to see any good in a college education, when he finds he has nothing to offer which business men want.

This is an intelligible point of view. It shows, as I have said, that the country does not feel itself rich enough for intellectual luxuries. But when I see it asserted that vocational training is necessary for the safety of Democracy (the lusty nursling which we persist in feeding from the bottle), I feel that I am asked to credit an absurdity. When the reason given for this dependence is the altruism of labour, — "In a democracy the activity of the people is directed towards the good of the whole number," — I know that common sense has been violated by an assertion which

no one is expected to take seriously. A life-career course may be established in every college in the land, and students carefully guarded from the inroads of distracting and unremunerative knowledge; but this praiseworthy thrift will not be practised in the interests of the public. The mechanical education, against which Mr. Lowell has protested sharply, is preëminently selfish. Its impelling motive is not "going over," but getting on.

"It takes a much better quality of mind for self-education than for education in the ordinary sense," says Mrs. Gerould; and no one will dispute this truth. Franklin had two years of schooling, and they were over and done with before he was twelve. His "cultural opportunities" were richer than those enjoyed by Mr. Gompers, and he had a consuming passion for knowledge. Vocational training was a simple thing in his day; but he glimpsed its possi-

bilities, and fitted it into place. He would have made an admirable "vocational counsellor" in the college he founded, had his counsels not been needed on weightier matters, and in wider spheres. As for industrial education, those vast efficiency courses given by leading manufacturers to their employees, which embrace an astonishing variety of marketable attainments, they would have seemed to him like the realization of a dream — a dream of diffused light and general intelligence.

We stand to-day on an educational no man's land, exposed to double fires, and uncertain which way to turn for safety. The elimination of Greek from the college curriculum blurred the high light, the supreme distinction, of scholarship. The elimination of Latin as an essential study leaves us without any educational standard save a correct knowledge of English, a partial knowledge of modern languages, and some

acquaintance, never clearly defined, with precise academic studies. The scientist discards many of these studies as not being germane to his subject. The professional student deals with them as charily as possible. The future financier fears to embarrass his mind with things he does not need to know.

Yet back of every field of labour lies the story of the labourer, and back of every chapter in the history of civilization lie the chapters that elucidate it. "Wisdom," says Santayana, "is the funded experience which mankind has gathered by living." Education gives to a student that fraction of knowledge which sometimes leads to understanding and a clean-cut basis of opinions. The process is engrossing, and, to certain minds, agreeable and consolatory. Man contemplates his fellow man with varied emotions, but never with unconcern. "The world," observed Bagehot tersely, "has a vested interest in itself."

The American Laughs

IT was the opinion of Thomas Love Peacock — who knew whereof he spoke — that "no man should ask another why he laughs, or at what, seeing that he does not always know, and that, if he does, he is not a responsible agent. . . . Reason is in no way essential to mirth."

This being so, why should human beings, individually and collectively, be so contemptuous of one another's humour? To be puzzled by it is natural enough. There is nothing in the world so incomprehensible as the joke we do not see. But to be scornful or angry, to say with Steele that we can judge a man's temper by the things he laughs at, is, in a measure, unreasonable. A man laughs as he loves, moved by secret springs that do not affect his neighbour. Yet no sooner did America

begin to breed humorists of her own than the first thing these gentlemen did was to cast doubts upon British humour. Even a cultivated laugher like Mr. Charles Dudley Warner suffered himself to become acrimonious on this subject; whereupon an English critic retaliated by saying that if Mr. Warner considered Knickerbocker's "New York" to be the equal of "Gulliver's Travels," and that if Mr. Lowell really thought Mr. N. P. Willis "witty," then there was no international standard of satire or of wit. The chances are that Mr. Lowell did not think Mr. Willis witty at all. He used the word in a friendly and unreflecting moment, not expecting a derisive echo from the other side of the sea.

And now Mr. Chesterton has protested in the "Illustrated London News" against the vogue of the American joke in England. He says it does not convey its point because the condi-

tions which give it birth are not understood, and the side-light it throws fails to illuminate a continent. One must be familiar with the intimacies of American life to enjoy their humorous aspect.

Precisely the same criticism was offered when Artemus Ward lectured in London more than a half-century ago. The humour of this once famous joker has become a disputable point. It is safe to say that anything less amusing than the passage read by Lincoln to his Cabinet in Mr. Drinkwater's play could not be found in the literature of any land. It cast a needless gloom over the scene, and aroused our sympathy for the officials who had to listen to it. But the American jest, like the Greek epic, should be spoken, not read; and it is claimed that when Artemus Ward drawled out his absurdities, which, like the Greek epic, were always subject to change, these absurdities were funny. Mr. Leacock has politely assured us

that London was "puzzled and enraptured with the very mystery of the humour"; but Mr. Leacock, being at that time three years old, was not there to discern this for himself. Dr. S. Weir Mitchell *was* there on the opening night, November 13, 1866, and found the puzzle and the mystery to be far in advance of the rapture. The description he was wont to give of this unique entertainment (a "Panorama," and a lecture on the Mormons), of the depressing, unventilated Egyptian Hall in which it was given, of the wild extravagances of the speaker, which grew wilder and wilder as the audience grew more and more bewildered, was funny enough, Heaven knows, but the essence of the fun lay in failure.

Americans, sixty years ago, were brought up on polygamous jests. The Mormons were our neighbours, and could be always relied upon to furnish a scandal, a thrill, or a joke. When

they mended their ways, and ceased to be reprehensible or amusing, the comic papers were compelled to fall back on Solomon, with whose marital experiences they have regaled us ever since. But to British eyes, Brigham Young was an unfamiliar figure; and to British minds, Solomon has always been distinguished for other things than wives. Therefore Artemus Ward's casual drolleries presupposed a humorous background which did not exist. A chance allusion to a young friend in Salt Lake City who had run away with a boarding school was received in stupefied silence. Then suddenly a woman's smothered giggle showed that light had dawned on one receptive brain. Then a few belated laughs broke out in various parts of the hall, as the idea travelled slowly along the thought currents of the audience, and the speaker went languidly on to the next unrecognizable pleasantry.

The criticism passed upon Americans to-day is that they laugh often and without discrimination. This is what the English say of us, and this is what some Americans have said of the English. Henry James complained bitterly that London play-goers laughed unseasonably at serious plays. I wonder if they received Ervine's "John Ferguson" in this fashion, as did American play-goers. That a tragedy harsh and unrelenting, that human pain, unbearable because unmerited, should furnish food for mirth may be comprehensible to the psychologist who claims to have a clue to every emotion; but to the ordinary mortal it is simply dumbfounding. People laughed at Molnar's "Liliom" out of sheer nervousness, because they could not understand it. And "Liliom" had its comedy side. But nobody could have helped understanding "John Ferguson," and there was no relief from its horror, its pitifulness, its sombre

surrender to the irony of fate. Yet ripples of laughter ran through the house; and the actress who played Hannah Ferguson confessed that this laughter had in the beginning completely unnerved her, but that she had steeled herself to meet and to ignore it.

It was said that British audiences were guilty of laughing at "Hedda Gabler," perhaps in sheer desperate impatience at the unreasonableness of human nature as unfolded in that despairing drama. They should have been forgiven and congratulated, and so should the American audiences who were reproached for laughing at "Mary Rose." The charm, the delicacy, the tragic sense of an unknown and arbitrary power with which Barrie invested his play were lost in the hands of incapable players, while its native dullness gained force and substance from their presentation. A lengthy dialogue on a pitch-black stage between an in-

visible soldier and an inarticulate ghost was neither enlivening nor terrifying. It would have been as hard to laugh as to shudder in the face of such tedious loquacity.

We see it often asserted that Continental play-goers are incapable of the gross stupidities ascribed to English and Americans, that they dilate with correct emotions at correct moments, that they laugh, weep, tremble, and even faint in perfect accord with the situations of the drama they are witnessing. When Maeterlinck's "Intruder" was played in Paris, women fainted; when it was played in Philadelphia, they tittered. Perhaps the quality of the acting may account for these varying receptions. A tense situation, imperfectly presented, degenerates swiftly into farce — into very bad farce, too, as Swift said of the vulgar malignities of fate.

The Dublin players brought to this

country a brand of humour and pathos with which we were unfamiliar. Irish comedy, as we knew it, was of the Dion Boucicault type, a pure product of stageland, and unrelated to any practical experiences of life. Here, on the contrary, was something indigenous to Ireland, and therefore strange to us. My first experience was at the opening night of Ervine's "Mixed Marriage," in New York. An audience, exclusively Semitic (so far as I could judge by looking at it), listened in patient bewilderment to the theological bickerings of Catholics and Protestants in Belfast. I sat in a box with Lady Gregory who was visibly disturbed by the slowness of the house at the uptake, and unaware that what was so familiar and vital to her was a matter of the purest unconcern to that particular group of Americans. The only thing that roused them from their apathy was the sudden rage with which, in the third act, Tom

Rainey shouted at his father: "Ye're an ould fool, that's what ye are; a damned ould fool!" At these reprehensible words a gust of laughter swept the theatre, destroying the situation on the stage, but shaking the audience back to life and animation. It was seemingly — though I should be sorry to think it — the touch of nature which makes the whole world kin.

When that mad medley of fun and fancy, of grossness and delicacy, "The Playboy of the Western World," was put on the American stage, men laughed — generally at the wrong time — out of the hopeless confusion of their minds. The "Playboy" was admittedly an enigma. The night I saw it, the audience, under the impression that it was anti-Irish, or anti-Catholic, or anti-moral, or anti-something, they were not sure what, hurled denunciations and one missile — which looked strangely like a piece of pie — at the

actors. It was a disgraceful scene, but not without its humorous side; for when the riotous interruptions had subsided, an elderly man arose, and, with the manner of an invited speaker at a public dinner, began, "From time immemorial" — But the house had grown tired of disturbances, and howled him down. He waited for silence, and then in the same composed and leisurely manner began again, "From time immemorial" — At this point one of the policemen who had been restoring order led him gently but forcibly out of the theatre; the play was resumed; and what it was that had happened from time immemorial we were destined never to know.

A source of superlative merriment in the United States is the two-reel comic of our motion-picture halls. Countless thousands of Americans look at it, and presumably laugh at it, every twenty-four hours. It is not unlike an amplified

and diversified Punch and Judy show, depending on incessant action and plenty of hard knocks. Hazlitt says that bangs and blows which we know do not hurt provoke legitimate laughter; and, until we see a funny film, we have no conception of the amount of business which can be constructed out of anything so simple as men hitting one another. Producers of these comics have taken the public into their confidence, and have assured us that their work is the hardest in the motion-picture industry; that the slugging policeman is trained for weary weeks to slug divertingly, and that every tumble has to be practised with sickening monotony before it acquires its purely accidental character. As for accessories — well, it takes more time and trouble to make a mouse run up a woman's skirt at the right moment, or a greyhound carry off a dozen crullers on its tail, than it does to turn out a

whole sentimental scenario, grey-haired mother, high-minded, pure-hearted convict son, lumber-camp virtue, town vice, and innocent childhood complete. Whether or not the time and trouble are well spent depends on the amount of money which that mouse and those crullers eventually wring from an appreciative and laughter-loving public.

The dearth of humorous situations — at no time inexhaustible — has compelled the two-reel comic to depend on such substitutes as speed, violence, and a succession of well-nigh inconceivable mishaps. A man acting in one cannot open a door, cross a street, or sit down to dinner without coming to grief. Even the animals — dogs, donkeys and pigs — are subject to catastrophes that must wreck their confidence in life. Fatness, besides being funny, is, under these circumstances, a great protection. The human body, swathed in rolls of cotton-wadding, is safe from contusions

and broken bones. When an immensely stout lady sinks into an armchair, only to be precipitated through a trap-door, and shot down a slide into a pond, we feel she has earned her pay. But after she has been dropped from a speeding motor, caught and lifted high in air by a balloon anchor, let down to earth with a parachute, picked up by an elephant, and carried through the streets at the head of a circus parade, we begin to understand the arduousness of art. Only the producers of comic "movies" know what "One crowded hour of glorious life" can be made to hold.

Laughter has been over-praised and over-analyzed, as well as unreasonably denounced. We do not think much about its determining causes — why should we? — until the contradictory definitions of philosophers, psychologists and men of letters compel us to recognize its inscrutable quality. Plato laid down the principle that our pleas-

ure in the ludicrous originates in the sight of another's misfortune. Its motive power is malice. Hobbes stoutly affirmed that laughter is not primarily malicious, but vainglorious. It is the rough, spontaneous assertion of our own eminence. "We laugh from strength, and we laugh at weakness." Hazlitt saw a lurking cruelty in the amusement of civilized men who have gaged the folly and frivolity of their kind. Bergson, who evidently does not frequent motion-picture halls, says that the comic makes its appeal to "the intelligence pure and simple." He raises laughter to the dignity of a "social gesture" and a corrective. We put our affections out of court, and impose silence upon our pity before we laugh; but this is only because the corrective would fail to correct if it bore the stamp of sympathy and kindness. Leacock, who deals in comics, is sure of but one thing, that all humour is anti-social;

and Stevenson ascribes our indestructible spirit of mirth to "the unplumbed childishness of man's imagination."

The illustrations given us by these eminent specialists are as unconvincing as the definitions they vouchsafe, and the rules they lay down for our guidance. Whenever we are told that a situation or a jest offers legitimate food for laughter, we cease to have any disposition to laugh. Just as we are often moved to merriment for no other reason than that the occasion calls for seriousness, so we are correspondingly serious when invited too freely to be amused. An entertainment which promises to be funny is handicapped from the start. It has to plough deep into men's risibilities before it can raise its crop of laughter. I have been told that when Forepaugh first fired a man out of a cannon, the audience laughed convulsively; not because it found anything ludicrous in the per-

formance, but because it had been startled out of its composure, and relieved from a gasping sense of fear.

Sidney Smith insisted that the overturning of a dinner-table which had been set for dinner was a laughable incident. Yet he was a married man, and must have known that such a catastrophe (which seems to us to belong strictly to the motion-picture field) could not have been regarded by Mrs. Smith, or by any other hostess, as amusing. Boswell tells us that Dr. Johnson was so infinitely diverted by hearing that an English gentleman had left his estate to his three sisters that he laughed until he was exhausted, and had to hold on to a post (he was walking home through the London streets) to keep himself from falling to the ground. Yet no reader of Boswell ever saw anything ludicrous in such a last will and testament. Sophocles makes Electra describe Clytemnestra as

"laughing triumphantly" over the murder of Agamemnon; but Electra was a prejudiced witness. Killing an undesired husband is no laughing matter, though triumph over its accomplishment — when failure means death — is a legitimate emotion. Clytemnestra was a singularly august and composed sinner. Not from her did Orestes and Electra inherit their nervous systems; and not on their testimony should we credit her with an excess of humour alike ill-timed and unbecoming.

In our efforts to discover what can never be discovered — the secret sources of laughter — we have experimented with American children; testing their appreciation of the ludicrous by giving them blocks which, when fitted into place, display absurd and incongruous pictures. Their reactions to this artificial stimulus are of value, only when they are old enough for perception, and young enough for candour. The mer-

riment of children, of little girls especially, is often unreal and affected. They will toss their heads and stimulate one another to peals of laughter which are a pure make-believe. When they are really absorbed in their play, and astir with delicious excitation, they do not laugh; they give vent to piercing shrieks which sound as if they were being cut into little pieces. These shrieks are the spontaneous expression of delight; but their sense of absurdity, which implies a sense of humour, is hard to capture before it has become tainted with pretence.

There are American newspapers which print every day a sheet or a half-sheet of comic pictures, and there are American newspapers which print every Sunday a coloured comic supplement. These sincere attempts to divert the public are well received. Their vulgarity does not offend. "What," asks the wise Santayana, "can we relish if

we recoil at vulgarity?" Their dullness is condoned. Life, for all its antics, is confessedly dull. Our absurdities may amuse the angels (Walpole had a cheerful vision of their laughter); but they cannot be relied on to amuse our fellow men. Nevertheless the coloured supplement passes from hand to hand — from parents to children, from children to servants. Even the smudgy black and whites of the daily press are soberly and conscientiously scrutinized. A man, reading his paper in the train, seldom skips that page. He examines every little smudge with attention, not seemingly entertained, or seeking entertainment, but without visible depression at its incompetence.

I once had the pleasure of hearing a distinguished etcher lecture on the art of illustrating. He said some harsh words about these American comics, and threw on the screen a reproduction of one of their most familiar series.

The audience looked at it sadly. "I am glad," commented the lecturer, "that you did not laugh. Those pictures are, as you perceive, as stupid as they are vulgar. Now I will show you some clever English work": and there appeared before us the once famous Ally Sloper recreating himself and his family at the seashore. The audience looked at him sadly. A solemn stillness held the hall. "Why don't you laugh?" asked the lecturer irritably. "I assure you that picture *is* funny." Whereupon everybody laughed; not because we saw the fun — which was not there to see — but because we were jolted into risibility by the unwarranted despotism of the demand.

The prohibition jest which stands preeminent in the United States, and has afforded French and English humorists a field which they have promptly and ably filled, draws its vitality from the inexhaustible springs of human

nature. Readers and play-goers profess themselves tired of it; moralists deprecate its undermining qualities; but the conflict between a normal desire and an interdict is too unadjustable, too rich in circumstance, and too far-reaching in results, to be accepted in sober silence. The complications incidental to prohibition, the battle of wits, the turns of the game, the adventures — often sorry enough — of the players, all present the essential elements of comedy. Mrs. Gerould has likened the situation to an obstacle race. It is that, and it is something more. In earlier, easier days, robbery was made justifiably droll. The master thief was equally at home in northern Europe and in the far East. England smiled at Robin Hood. France evolved that amazing epithet, "chevalier d'industrie." But arrayed against robbery were a moral law and a commandment. Arrayed against wine are a legal ordi-

nance and the modern cult of efficiency. It will be long before these become so sacrosanct as to disallow a laugh.

The worst that has been said of legitimate American humour is that it responds to every beck and call. Even Mr. Ewan S. Agnew, whose business it is to divert the British public, considers that the American public is too easily diverted. We laugh, either from light-hearted insensitiveness, or from the superabundant vitality, the half-conscious sense of power, which bubbles up forever in the callous gaiety of the world. Certainly Emerson is the only known American who despised jocularity, and who said early and often that he did not wish to be amused. The most striking passage in the letters of Mr. Walter Page is the one which describes his distaste for the "jocular" Washington luncheons at which he was a guest in the summer of 1916. He had come fresh from the rending anxiety,

the heroic stress and strain of London; and the cloudless atmosphere of our capital wounded his spirit. England jested too. "Punch" had never been so brilliant as in the torturing years of war. But England had earned the right to jest. There was a tonic quality in her laughter. Page feared from the bottom of his soul lest the great peaceful nation, safe, rich and debonair, had suffered her "mental neutrality" to blot out from her vision the agony of Europe, and the outstanding facts which were responsible for the disaster.

This unconcern, which is the balance wheel of comedy, has tempered the American mind to an easy acceptance of chance. Its enthusiasms are modified, its censures are softened by a restraining humour which is rooted deeply in indifference. We recognize the sanity of our mental attitude, but not its incompleteness. Understanding and sympathy are products of civilized life,

as clarifying in their way as tolerance and a quick perception of the ludicrous. An American newspaper printed recently a photograph entitled "Smilin' Through," which showed two American girls peering through two holes in a shell-torn wall of Verdun, and laughing broadly at their sport. The names and addresses of these frolicsome young women were given, and their enjoyment of their own drollery was emphasized for the diversion of other young women at home.

Now granted that every nation, like every man, bears the burden of its own grief. Granted also that every woman, like every man, has her own conception of the humorous, and that we cannot reasonably take umbrage because we fail to see the fun. Nevertheless the memories of Verdun do not make for laughter. There is that in its story which sobers the world it has ennobled. Four hundred thousand French soldiers

gave their lives for that battered fortress which saved Paris and France. Mr. Brownell reminds us that there is such a thing as rectitude outside the sphere of morals, and that it is precisely this austere element in taste which assures our self-respect. We cannot analyze, and therefore cannot criticize, that frothy fun which Bergson has likened to the foam which the receding waves leave on the ocean sands; but we know, as he knows, that the substance is scanty, and the after-taste is bitter in our mouths. We are tethered to our kind, and it is the sureness of our reaction to the great and appealing facts of history which makes us inheritors of a hard-won civilization, and qualified citizens of the world.

The Idolatrous Dog

WE shall never know why a feeling of shame attends certain harmless sensations, certain profoundly innocent tastes and distastes. Why, for example, are we abashed when we are cold, and boastful when we are not? There is no merit or distinction in being insensitive to cold, or in wearing thinner clothing than one's neighbour. And what strange impulse is it which induces otherwise truthful people to say they like music when they do not, and thus expose themselves to hours of boredom? We are not necessarily morons or moral lepers because we have no ear for harmony. It is a significant circumstance that Shakespeare puts his intolerant lines,

"The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils.
. . . . . .
Let no such man be trusted" —

in the mouth of Lorenzo who disdained neither stratagems nor spoils, and who carried off the Jew's ducats as well as the Jew's daughter. And Jessica, who sits by his side in the moonlight, and responds with delicate grace

"I am never merry when I hear sweet music,"

is the girl who "gilded" herself with stolen gold, and gave her dead mother's ring for a monkey.

It is a convenience not to feel cold when the thermometer falls, and it is a pleasure to listen appreciatively to a symphony concert. It is also a convenience to relish the proximity of dogs, inasmuch as we live surrounded by these animals, and it is a pleasure to respond to their charm. But there is no virtue in liking them, any more than there is virtue in liking wintry weather or stringed instruments. An affection for dogs is not, as we have been given to understand, a test of an open and

generous disposition. Still less is their affection for us to be accepted as a guarantee of our integrity. The assumption that a dog knows a good from a bad human being when he sees one is unwarranted. It is part of that engulfing wave of sentiment which swept the world in the wake of popular fiction. Dickens is its most unflinching exponent. Henry Gowan's dog, Lion, springs at the throat of Blandois, alias Lagnier, alias Rigaud, for no other reason than that he recognizes him as a villain, without whom the world would be a safer and better place to live in. Florence Dombey's dog, Diogenes, looks out of an upper window, observes Mr. Carker peacefully walking the London streets, and tries to jump down and bite him then and there. He sees at once what Mr. Dombey has not found out in years — that Carker is a base wretch, unworthy of the confidence reposed in him.

A few animals of this kind might, in real life, close the courts of justice. The Dickens dog is detective, prosecuting attorney, judge, jury and executioner, all in one. He stands responsible for a whole school of fictitious canines who combine the qualities of Vidocq, Sherlock Holmes, and the Count of Monte Cristo. I read recently a story in which the villain was introduced as "that anomalous being, the man who doesn't like dogs." After that, no intelligent reader could have been unprepared to find him murdering his friend and partner. So much was inevitable. And no experienced reader could have been unprepared for the behaviour of the friend and partner's dog, which recognizes the anomaly as a person likely to commit murder, and, without wasting time on circumstantial evidence, tracks him down, and, unaided, brings him to his death. A simple, clean-cut retribution, contrasting favourably

with the cumbersome processes of law.

A year ago the Governor of Maine had the misfortune to lose his dog. He signified his sense of loss, and his appreciation of the animal's good qualities, by lowering the American flag on the Augusta State House to half-mast. He was able to do this because he was Governor, and there was no one to say him nay. Nevertheless, certain sticklers for formality protested against an innovation which opened up strange possibilities for the future; and one logical lady observed that a dog was no more a citizen than was a strawberry patch, a statement not open to contradiction. The country at large, however, supported the Governor's action. Newspaper men wrote editorials lauding the "homespun" virtues of an official who set a true value on an honest dog's affection. Poets wrote verses about "Old Glory" and "Garry" (the dog's

name); and described Saint Peter as promptly investing this worthy quadruped with the citizenship of Heaven. The propriety or impropriety of lowering the national flag for an animal — which was the question under dispute — was buried beneath the avalanche of sentiment which is always ready to fall at the sound of a dog's name.

A somewhat similar gust of criticism swept Pennsylvania when a resident of that State spent five hundred dollars on the obsequies of his dog. The Great War, though drawing to a close, was not yet over, and perhaps the thought of men unburied on the battle-field, and refugees starving for bread, intensified public feeling. There was the usual outcry, as old as Christianity — "this might have been given to the poor." There was the usual irrelevant laudation of the Pennsylvania dog, and of dogs in general. People whose own affairs failed to occupy their attention

(there are many such) wrote vehement letters to the daily press. At last a caustic reader chilled the agitation by announcing that he was prepared to give five hundred dollars any day for the privilege of burying his next-door neighbour's dog. Whether or not this offer was accepted, the public never knew; but what troubled days and sleepless nights must have prompted its prodigality!

The honour accorded to the dog is no new thing. It has for centuries rewarded his valour and fidelity. Responsibilities, duties, compensations — these have always been his portion. Sirius shines in the heavens, and Cerberus guards in hell. The dog, Katmir, who watched over the Seven Sleepers for three hundred and nine years, gained Paradise for his pains, as well he might. Even the ill-fated hounds of Actæon, condemned to kill their more ill-fated master, are in some sort im-

mortal, inasmuch as we may know, if we choose, the names of every one of them. Through the long pages of legend and romance the figure of the dog is clearly outlined; and when history begins with man's struggle for existence, the dog may be found his ally and confederate. It was a strange fatality which impelled this animal to abandon communal life and the companionship of his kind for the restraints, the safety, the infinite weariness of domesticity. It was an amazing tractableness which caused him to accept a set of principles foreign to his nature — the integrity of work, the honourableness of servitude, the artificial values of civilization.

As a consequence of this extraordinary change of base, we have grown accustomed to judge the dog by human standards. In fact, there are no other standards which apply to him. The good dog, like the good man, is the dog

which has duties to perform, and which performs them faithfully. The bad dog, like the bad man, is the dog which is idle, ill-tempered and over-indulged by women. Women are responsible for most of the dog-failures, as well as for many of the man-failures of the world. So long as they content themselves with toy beasts, this does not much matter; but a real dog, beloved and therefore pampered by his mistress, is a lamentable spectacle. He suffers from fatty degeneration of his moral being.

What if the shepherd dog fares hardly, and if exposure stiffens his limbs! He has at least lived, and played his part in life. Nothing more beautiful or more poignant has ever been written about any animal than James Hogg's description of his old collie which could no longer gather in the sheep, and with which he was compelled to part, because — poor Ettrick shepherd — he could not afford to pay

the tax on two dogs. The decrepit beast refused to be separated from the flocks which had been his care and pride. Day after day he hobbled along, watching the new collie bustling about his work, and — too wise to interfere — looking with reproachful eyes at the master who had so reluctantly discarded him.

The literature of the dog is limitless. A single shelf would hold all that has been written about the cat. A library would hardly suffice for the prose and verse dedicated to the dog. From "Gêlert" to "Rab" and "Bob, Son of Battle," he has dominated ballad and fiction. Few are the poets and few the men of letters who have not paid some measure of tribute to him. Goethe, indeed, and Alfred de Musset detested all dogs, and said so composedly. Their detestation was temperamental, and not the result of an unfortunate encounter, such as hardened the heart of Dr. Isaac Barrow, mathematician,

and Master of Trinity College. Sidney Smith tells us with something akin to glee that this eminent scholar, when taking an early stroll in the grounds of a friend and host, was attacked by a huge and unwarrantably suspicious mastiff. Barrow, a fighter all his life (a man who would fight Algerine pirates was not to be easily daunted), hurled the dog to the ground, and fell on top of him. The mastiff could not get up, but neither could Barrow, who called loudly for assistance. It came, and the combatants were separated; but a distaste for morning strolls and an aversion for dogs lingered in the Master's mind. There was one less enthusiast in the world.

We are apt to think that the exuberance of sentiment entertained by Americans for dogs is a distinctively British trait, that we have inherited it along with our language, our literature, our manliness, our love of sport, our ad-

mirable outdoor qualities. But it may be found blooming luxuriously in other and less favoured lands. That interesting study of Danish childhood by Carl Ewald, called "My Little Boy," contains a chapter devoted to the lamentable death of a dog named Jean, "the biggest dog in Denmark." This animal, though at times condescending to kindness, knew how to maintain his just authority. "He once bit a boy so hard that the boy still walks lame. He once bit his own master." The simple pride with which these incidents are narrated would charm a dog-lover's soul. And the lame boy's point of view is not permitted to intrude.

Of all writers who have sung the praises of the dog, and who have justified our love for him, Maeterlinck has given the fullest expression to the profound and absorbing egotism which underlies this love. Never for a moment does he consider his dog save as a wor-

shipper. Never does he think of himself save as a being worshipped. Never does he feel that this relationship can be otherwise than just, reasonable, and satisfying to both parties. "The dog," he says, "reveres us as though we had drawn him out of nothing. He has a morality which surpasses all that he is able to discover in himself, and which he can practise without scruple and without fear. He possesses truth in its fullness. He has a certain and infinite ideal."

And what is this ideal? "He" (the dog) "is the only living being that has found, and recognizes, an indubitable, unexceptionable and definite god."

And who is this god? M. Maeterlinck, you, I, anybody who has bought and reared a puppy. Yet we are told that the dog is intelligent. What is there about men which can warrant the worship of a wise beast? What sort of "truth in its fullness" is compatible

with such a blunder? Yet it is for the sake of being idolized that we prize and cherish the idolater. Our fellow mortals will not love us unless we are lovable. They will not admire us unless we are admirable. Our cats will probably neither love nor admire us, being self-engrossed animals, free from encumbering sensibilities. But our dogs will love and admire the meanest of us, and feed our colossal vanity with their uncritical homage. M. Maeterlinck recognizes our dependence on the dog for the deification we crave, and is unreasonably angry with the cat for her aloofness. In her eyes, he complains, we are parasites in our own homes. "She curses us from the depths of her mysterious heart."

She does not. She tolerates us with a wise tolerance, recognizing our usefulness, and indulgent of our foibles. Domesticity has not cost her the heavy price it has cost the dog. She has

merely exchanged the asylum of cave or tree for the superior accommodation of the house. Her habits remain unaltered, her freedom unviolated. Cream-fed and pampered, she still loves the pleasures of the chase; nor will she pick and choose her prey at the recommendation of prejudiced humanity. M. Maeterlinck, who has striven to enter into the consciousness of the dog, describes it as congested with duties and inhibitions. There are chairs he must not sit on, rooms he must not enter, food he must not steal, babies he must not upset, cats he must not chase, visitors he must not bark at, beggars and tramps he must not permit to enter the gates. He lives under as many, and as strict, compulsions as though he were a citizen of the United States. By comparison with this perverted intelligence, this artificial morality, the mind of the cat appears like a cool and spacious chamber, with only

her own spirit to fill it, and only her own tastes and distastes to be consulted and obeyed.

Perhaps it is because the dog is so hedged in by rules and regulations that he has lost his initiative. Descended from animals that lived in packs, and that enjoyed the advantages of communal intelligence, he could never have possessed this quality as it was possessed by an animal that lived alone, and had only his own acuteness and experience to rely on. But having surrendered his will to the will of man, and his conscience to the keeping of man, the dog has by now grown dependent for his simplest pleasures upon man's caprice. He loves to roam; but whereas the cat does roam at will, rightly rejecting all interference with her liberty, the dog craves permission to accompany his master on a stroll, and, being refused, slinks sadly back to confinement and inaction. I have great respect for

those exceptional dogs that take their exercise when they need or desire it in self-sufficing solitude. I once knew an Irish terrier that had this independent turn of mind. He invited himself to daily constitutionals, and might have been seen any morning trotting along the road, miles away from home, with the air of an animal walking to keep his flesh down. In the end he was run over by a speeding motor, but what of that? Die we must, and, while he lived, he was free.

A lordliness of sentiment mars much of the admirable poetry written about dogs. The poet thrones himself before addressing his devoted and credulous ally. Even Matthew Arnold's lines to "Kaiser Dead" — among the best of their kind — are heavy with patronage:

> "But all those virtues which commend
> The humbler sort who serve and tend,
> Were thine in store, thou faithful friend."

To be sure, Kaiser was a mongrel; but

why emphasize his low estate? As a matter of fact, mongrels, like self-made men, are apt to have a peculiar complacency of demeanour. They do not rank themselves among "the humbler sort"; but "serve and tend" on the same conditions as their betters.

Two years ago Mr. Galsworthy, who stands in the foremost rank of dog-lovers, and who has drawn for us some of the most lifelike and attractive dogs in fiction, pleaded strongly and emotionally for the exemption of this animal from any form of experimental research. He had the popular sentiment of England back of him, because popular sentiment always *is* emotional. The question of vivisection is one of abstract morality. None but the supremely ignorant can deny its usefulness. There remain certain questions which call for clean-cut answers. Does our absolute power over beasts carry with it an absolute right? May we justifiably

sacrifice them for the good of humanity? What degree of pain are we morally justified in inflicting on them to save men from disease and death? If we faced the issue squarely, we should feel no more concern for the kind of animal which is used for experimentation than for the kind of human being who may possibly benefit by the experiment. Right and wrong admit of no sentimental distinctions. Yet the vivisectionist pleads, "Is not the life of a young mother worth more than the life of a beast?" The anti-vivisectionist asks: "How can man deliberately torture the creature that loves and trusts him?" And Mr. Galsworthy admitted that he had nothing to say about vivisection in general. Cats and rabbits might take their chances. He asked only that the dog should be spared.

It has been hinted more than once that if we develop the dog's intelligence too far, we may end by robbing him of

his illusions. He has absorbed so many human characteristics — vanity, sociability, snobbishness, a sense of humour and a conscience — that there is danger of his also acquiring the critical faculty. He will not then content himself with flying at the throats of villains — the out-and-out villain is rare in the common walks of life — he will doubt the godlike qualities of his master. The warmth of his affection will chill, its steadfastness will be subject to decay.

Of this regrettable possibility there is as yet no sign. The hound, Argus, beating the ground with his feeble tail in an expiring effort to welcome the disguised Odysseus, is a prototype of his successor to-day. Scattered here and there in the pages of history are instances of unfaithfulness; but their rarity gives point to their picturesqueness. Froissart tells us that the greyhound, Math, deserted his master, King Richard the Second, to fawn on

the Duke of Lancaster who was to depose and succeed him; and that a greyhound belonging to Charles of Blois fled on the eve of battle to the camp of John de Montfort, seeking protection from the stronger man. These anecdotes indicate a grasp of political situations which is no part of the dog's ordinary make-up. Who can imagine the fortunate, faithful little spaniel that attended Mary Stuart in her last sad months, and in her last heroic hours, fawning upon Queen Elizabeth? Who can imagine Sir Walter Scott's dogs slinking away from him when the rabble of Jedburgh heaped insults on his bowed grey head?

The most beautiful words ever written about a dog have no reference to his affectionate qualities. Simonides, celebrating the memory of a Thessalian hound, knows only that he was fleet and brave. "Surely, even as thou liest in this tomb, I deem the wild

beasts yet fear thy white bones, Lycas; and thy valour great Pelion knows, and the lonely peaks of Cithæron." This is heroic praise, and so, in a fashion, is Byron's epitaph on Boatswain. But Byron, being of the moderns, can find no better way of honouring dogs than by defaming men; a stupidity, pardonable in the poet only because he was the most sincere lover of animals the world has ever known. His tastes were catholic, his outlook was whimsical. He was not in the least discomposed when his forgetful wolf-hound bit him, or when his bulldog bit him without the excuse of forgetfulness. Moore tells us that the first thing he saw on entering Byron's palace in Venice was a notice, "Keep clear of the dog!" and the first thing he heard was the voice of his host calling out anxiously, "Take care, or that monkey will fly at you."

It is a pleasant relief, after flounder-

ing through seas of sentiment, to read about dogs that were every whit as imperfect as their masters; about Cowper's "Beau" who has been immortalized for his disobedience; or Sir Isaac Newton's "Diamond" who has been immortalized for the mischief he wrought; or Prince Rupert's "Boy" who was shot while loyally pulling down a rebel on Marston Moor; or the Church of England spaniel, mentioned by Addison, who proved his allegiance to the Establishment by worrying a dissenter. It is also a pleasure of a different sort to read about the wise little dog who ran away from Mrs. Welsh (Carlyle's mother-in-law) on the streets of Edinburgh, to follow Sir Walter Scott; and about the London dog of sound literary tastes who tried for many nights to hear Dickens read. It is always possible that if men would exact a less unalterable devotion from their dogs, they might find these ani-

mals to be possessed of individual and companionable traits.

But not of human sagacity. It is their privilege to remain beasts, bound by admirable limitations, thrice happy in the things they do not have to know, and feel, and be. "The Spectator" in a hospitable mood once invited its readers to send it anecdotes of their dogs. The invitation was, as might be imagined, cordially and widely accepted. Mr. Strachey subsequently published a collection of these stories in a volume which had all the vraisemblance of Hans Andersen and "The Arabian Nights." Reading it, one could but wonder and regret that the tribe of man had risen to unmerited supremacy. The "Spectator" dogs could have run the world, the war and the Versailles Conference without our lumbering interference.

THE END

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